

RUINS OF THE DRAGON LORD

THE PATH OF ARCHADEROTH



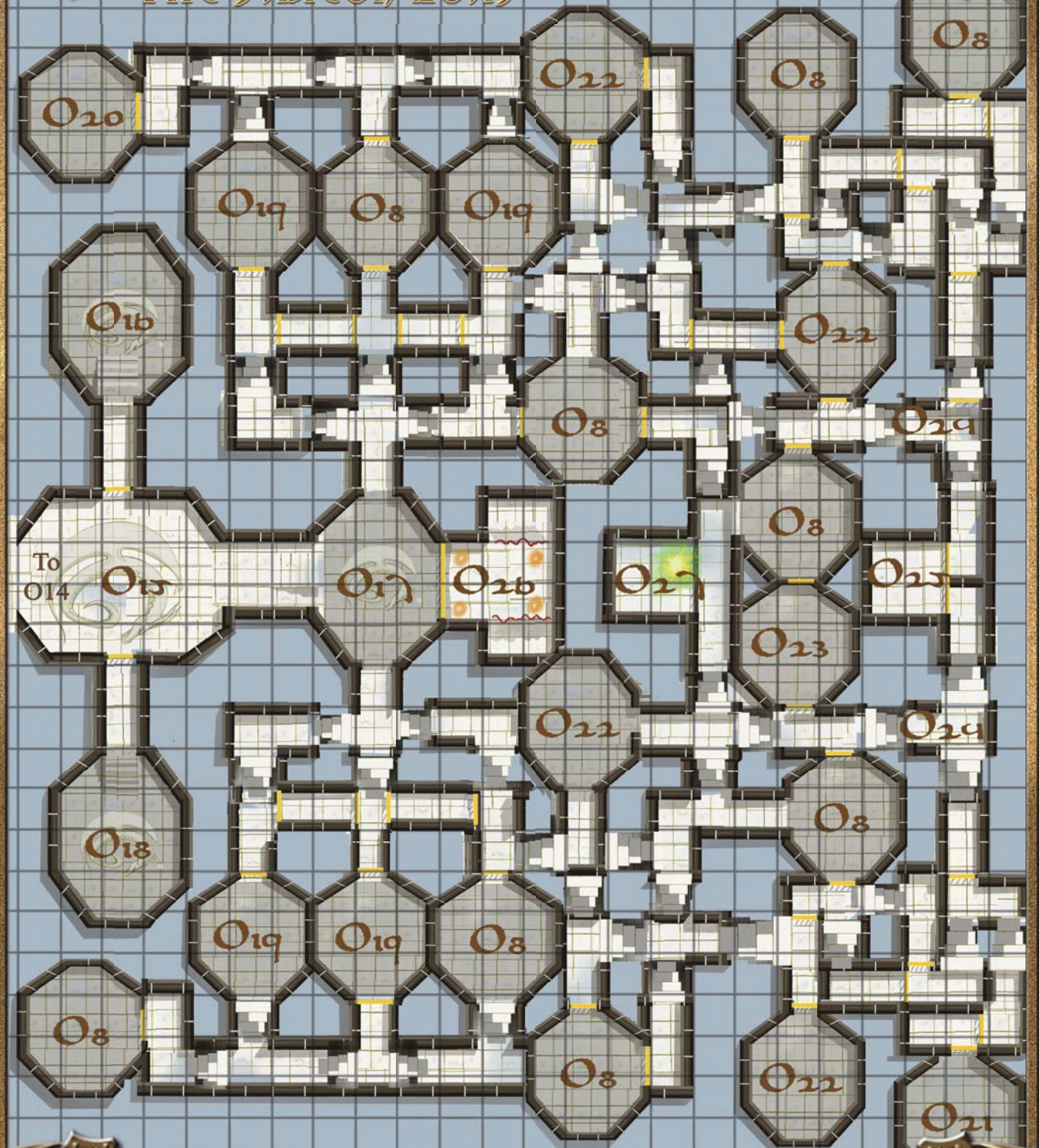
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ARCHADEROTH



LOST TEMPLE OF THE DRAGON LORD



RUINS OF THE DRAGON LORD

THE PATH OF ARCHANEROTH

J C ALVAREZ

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INTRODUCTION

A dark mountain looms against the darker sky. It seems made of wisps of shadow and faint traces of evil fancy, like it does not quite exist. Rather like a nightmare.

The terrain around the mountain is no better, all grown with rocky peaks and crags like a festering disease. It is completely devoid of colour too, as if on purpose; a sickly rash for a sickly landscape.

It rains of course. The rain, however, is not like water; instead it looks like cold white drips of ash. White ash falling on black soil; all of it is black and white.

Ghostly forms cling to the rocks and crevices, their appearance almost human, their vaporous mouths congealed in what appear to be screams but may also be dreadful celebration.

This, then, is Mount Moru. It has a world around it, made of legend and dread; it has a maze inside, inhabited by dragons and monsters.

At the base of the mountain, you can see a tiny standing stone, roughly the size of a man. It has some undecipherable carvings, though there is always the nagging doubt they actually mean something. Like a warning.

A road goes up the mountain. You really should not follow that road.

You really should not admit this mountain exists.

But here it is.

The Entrance Road

This is the road to Mount Moru.

It lies in the middle of the Morudhain lands, past Meadowvale and the Last Shrine. Just getting here is a bit of an adventure in itself, though what comes next is far more dangerous and shall only become deadlier as the road goes nearer and deeper inside the mountain. Ahead lies an underground complex the likes of which are rarely seen, one of the greatest, largest and deepest subterranean realms in existence. There is a whole world inside Mount Moru; a world inhabited mostly by monsters, traps and labyrinthine tunnels; a world ripe for adventure but also for peril and death. It may take months or even years for an adventuring party to explore it fully.

For those willing to attempt the task, there is a direct, if meandering, road leading to and up the fearsome peak. The trip is relatively safe, up to the point at which this road ends at the Entrance Caves that lead inside Mount Moru.

Entering Mount Moru

There are three known ways to access the insides of Mount Moru:

The Entrance Caves

This is the safest and easiest way to enter Mount Moru. It requires nothing more than continuing on this road until arriving at the old mine site marking the caves' entrance. Reaching the entrance caves from here takes two days, one to reach the base of Mount Moru and another to follow the road up the mountain until reaching the caves' mouth, near the peak.

The Haunted Lake

Entering the haunted lake is dangerous, even when disregarding the unproven ghost stories. The underground currents feeding it cause strong undertows threatening those that come near it with a watery grave. Reaching the lower haunted lake from here takes two days of circling the mountain; after that, a traveller must climb the treacherous cliffs behind its waterfall to reach the upper lake, which leads directly inside the mountain. This climb takes at least another full day, though it may often take more.

The Lost Pass

In olden times, the pass of Moru Road used to be a sure way through the base of Mount Moru, allowing travellers following Moru Road to cross the mountain roots without having to go around it. Now the pass is mostly blocked and the road leading to it has fallen into disuse. Should a traveller find a way to surmount the precarious chasms surrounding the pass and somehow find a way through the tons of rubble blocking it, it would constitute a practical route into the mountain. Reaching the Lost Pass from here takes less than eight hours, though in all likelihood it is a fruitless trip.

Besides these, there are surely countless other ways inside Mount Moru, though they remain mostly unaccounted for. Perhaps a persevering explorer shall have more luck at finding them, most likely as an emergency exit rather than an entrance.

INTRODUCTION

ADDITIONAL DUNGEONS

The 19 dungeon levels featured in this book do not even cover half the area of inner Mount Moru. It is quite reasonable to assume there are more dungeons or even whole new mountain levels, located beside or just above (or below) the ones featured here. The Games Master is free to create and expand on Mount Moru as needed.

Inside Mount Moru

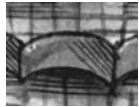
Once inside Mount Moru, most travellers use keyed maps to find their way. Some of the areas within the mountain are quite difficult to find without the help of a map. Any explorer entering Mount Moru should remember to use a keyed map and follow the indications marking what is inside each area. Keyed maps with clear descriptions of

inner Mount Moru are increasingly rare, particularly at the lowest levels which remain unknown even to the best cartographers and explorers.

The Three Books

Ruins of the Dragon Lord is just one of the three books written about Mount Moru, the other two being *The Dragon Stone* and *Tales of Mount Moru*. This book in particular contains detailed information on Mount Moru as an adventure and exploration site, describing most of the encounters, traps and natural dangers likely to be found in it. Despite the veritable wealth of detailed information contained in these pages, however, those who wish to tell tales based on this book should make sure to read the other two grimoires as well; many of the encounters and stories described in this tome depend on additional background and information contained in the other two books.

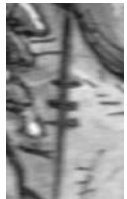
MAP KEY



ARCHWAY



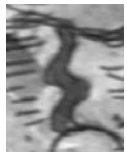
NATURAL WALL



BARBED GATE/CELL



NORMAL WALL



CURTAIN



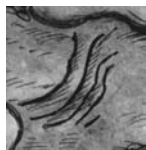
PIT



DOOR



SECRET DOOR



NATURAL STAIRS



STAIRS

1 square is equal to 10 feet on all maps other than poster maps (Area O) on which 1 square equals 5 feet.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

This section is the closest to the surface of Mount Moru; most of the mountain's outside accesses lead to an area in the Upper Dungeon. It comprises the following areas:

Area A. The Entrance Caves

A long-abandoned Morudhain mine site.

Area B. The Goblin Fortress

This area used to be the uppermost outpost of the ancient Athans dwelling inside Mount Moru; a hostile force of goblins and other evil humanoids took over it recently.

Area C. The Lost Tunnels

Old dark caves, blocked and condemned long ago when the Athan fortress was built at **Area B**.

Area D. Temple of the Goblin God

Once this was a temple to the Athans' Dragon Lord; now it is used for goblin deity worship.

Area E. Drowned Mines

This used to be a prosperous and advanced dwarven mine until a flood destroyed it; it is currently regarded as a haunted place.

Area A: The Entrance Caves

These dreary, silent caves are a testament to the Morudhain's first and last attempt to settle in Mount Moru. They are all that remains of a half-built mine site, which had to be abandoned for unknown reasons. The caves still feature the vestiges of what aspired to be a prosperous mine, now reduced to a couple loose timbers, overturned mine wagons and rusted rails.

Area **A1** can only be reached from the outside, after following the road up from the base of Mount Moru for roughly one day. From there, a 100 foot long mine tunnel leads into Area **A1**. The Entrance Caves may also be reached from the Goblin Fortress, via the great entrance connecting areas **A15** and **B1**.

A1: Guard Post

Other than dirt and wooden scaffoldings, this reduced cave features no more than a couple of rotting wooden stools and an unlit torch attached to the wall; surely a vestige of when the area was inhabited.

This area is usually vacant, exactly as described; however, a successful Spot or Search check (DC 15) reveals the

stools and torch are used somewhat more frequently than they are made to appear.

Creatures (EL ½)

When the company stationed at **Area B** expects intruders or trouble, 2 goblin scouts are sent to the guard post at **A1**. If the Games Master cannot decide whether the goblins are guarding this post or not, assume there is a 25% chance they are here. If the goblins are actually in the area, they attempt to hide among the rock crevices and timbers (+5 Hide check against a DC equal to the intruders' opposed Spot check) until they have ascertained their nature and intentions or, preferably, until the intruders leave. If forced to attack, they do so among loud warning screams, with a 10% chance of attracting the attention and help of a goblin or orc patrol, which arrives in 2d6 rounds.

Goblin scouts (2 1st level goblin warriors): hp 5 each; see 'Goblin' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

A2: Old Mine Tunnel

This old tunnel has no features except for old mine debris and the clear appearance of a digging job interrupted long ago.

Many of the tunnels inside Area A end in one of these mining dead ends. Any valuable ore to be found here has long gone to thieves and, more recently, to the plunder chests at **Area B**. If a creature dawdles too long in these areas, there is a 10% chance of attracting a random encounter as described above.

A3: Skewer's Lair

This is a natural cave, illuminated by a single torch on the north wall. The flicker of the flames suggests draconic, monstrous images on the shadowed stone walls... and then you see it: a monstrous lizard, dragon-like indeed, lunging at you from the other side of the cave.

Other than going all the way around through the intervening chambers, the only means of entering this cave is finding the secret door on its west wall, which requires a successful Search check (DC 15). This secret door is little more than a rock, positioned by the goblins so as to obstruct an inconvenient passageway. Other than this entrance, the only way in is the east door (see below). There is a heap of rotting bones and flesh on the cave's southwest corner; this is the guard lizard's refuse pile.

Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; 20 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 20; Break DC 25.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

THE ENTRANCE CAVES AS A DUNGEON

The walls at areas **A1-A10** have a thickness of three feet, hardness 8, 540 hit points per square and a break DC of 50. The walls at areas **A11-A15** are one-foot thick; with hardness 8 and 90 hit points per square. Their break DC is 35.

During the day, The tunnels between Areas **A1** and **A4** receive a dim light from outside, allowing normal vision up to 30 feet and reduced vision up to 60 feet. Beyond Area **A4**, however, the light is much dimmer, even in daylight; treat as normal darkness until reaching the illuminated areas at **A10-A15**, which have lit torches set at 20-foot intervals in all the walls.

The goblins and orcs assigned to Areas **A10-A15** and **Area B** have been instructed to make the place look deserted, so they take good care of not taking good care of the area. As a result, the entrance caves always look almost too abandoned and neglected.

From **A1** to **A10**, the entire area is an old mine, with walls and ceilings of unworked stone and earth, held together by timber scaffoldings. **A11** and beyond have good quality masonry walls, floors and ceiling. This masonry is the centuries-old work of the ancient Athans. A character that is already familiar with the Athan culture may attempt a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 15) to recognise the area's masonry as Athan work.

Creatures (EL 2)

'Skewer', a large, half-tamed, constantly-hungry lizard is kept here as a guard against any intruder that might discover the secret entrance to the west; it is also used to dispose of unwanted prisoners or rebellious soldiers. As soon as it sees anything that vaguely resembles food, it leaps at it; its owners prevent this danger by always entering with a food offering held out in front of them. Skewer's chain holds it to the wall (break DC 25), though it allows it full mobility inside its cave.

Skewer (Monitor Lizard): hp 22; see Chapter Three: Animals in the *MM*.

Treasure: The pile of half-eaten bodies on the corner still contains a few undigested goods Skewer's owners have not found; a successful Search check (DC 10) made on this pile reveals 1d4 gold pieces and a broken but repairable short sword.

A4: JUNCTION

You reach a crossroads in the mine; from here you might continue on this same tunnel, or else turn left or right. In the middle of the road there is an overturned mine wagon among a pile of debris.

Random Encounters in the Entrance Caves

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area A**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering a hostile creature, randomly determined or chosen from the following table:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREA A

D%	Encounter
01-20	1 dire rat
21-30	1 Medium monstrous centipede (vermin)
31-45	1 Small monstrous spider (vermin)
46-60	1d2 dire rats
61-75	1d2+1 Medium monstrous centipedes (vermin)
71-80	1d2+1 Small monstrous spiders (vermin)
81-85	1 goblin scout ¹
86-90	1 orc guard ¹
91	1 darkmantle
92-96	1d3+1 goblin scouts ¹
97-99	1d2+1 orc guards ¹
00	1 ankheg

¹ 1st level warrior

The statistics for the creatures given on this list may be found on the corresponding sections of Chapter One in the *MM*, except for vermin, which may be found in Chapter 3.

This is nothing more than a normal crossroads, except for the fact the overturned wagon holds a surprise.

Creatures (EL 1/2)

A dire rat lives inside the overturned wagon, from which it often ventures out in search of food. The rat immediately attacks any creature that messes in any way with the wagon. Detecting the dire rat's presence before touching the wagon requires a Spot check (DC 20).

Dire Rat: hp 5; see 'Dire Animals' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Inside the wagon there is a pile of mine trash mixed with the dire rat's refuse. A successful Search check (DC 10) reveals 1d3 pieces of silver ore (worth 5 gp each) among the rubbish.

A5: DIRE RAT DEN

This appears as another featureless, abandoned mine tunnel, except for the barely audible skittering noises all around...

THE UPPER DUNGEON

Other than the dire rat family inhabiting it, this is a typical mine tunnel, just like those labelled as **Area A2**.

Creatures (EL 1)

Three dire rats live in tiny cavities behind the walls of this tunnel; they fearlessly attack any creature that enters their territory. The place is particularly suited for a rat colony; if all three dire rats are killed, another 1d4 dire rats take their place within 24 hours.

Dire Rats (3): hp 5 each; see 'Dire Animals' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

A6: The Stone of Goodbye

This appears to be just like the other condemned tunnels in this mine; nothing but a huge pile of mine debris. A huge amount of rubble blocks the passage.

This is in fact the last mine tunnel the Morudhain managed to dig before they abandoned it. Whatever happened, they left it halfway done. However, true to Morudhain custom, they left a standing stone to mark their last passage through the area.

A successful Search check (DC 10) or Spot check (DC 15) reveals a Small (three foot tall) standing stone with some Morudhain engravings, hidden in plain sight among the mine rubble. Any character that speaks the Morudhain tongue or succeeds at a Decipher Script check (DC 20) may read what it says:

*The Path Dies Here
We Shall Seek the Dragon Lord*

A successful Craft (stonework) check (DC 15), Search check (DC 20) or Survival check (DC 20) reveals the stone was carved and left here more than a year ago.

There is nothing more to find here, except for mine rubble and debris.

A7: Mine Cave

This is a large cave, more than 40 feet across. It is absolutely littered with the remains of tools, furniture and assorted debris. However, some of the remains seem much more recent than the others, as if they had been left only a few days ago.

The cave's entrance sports a warning sign, improvised on a rotted wood plank. It does not seem to be written in the Common tongue...

During the mine's heyday, the Morudhain used this cave as a storage area for both their tools and their ore. Since it has no doors or compartments anywhere, it is safe to assume they used living guards as a safety measure. Now, however, the cave has a much more dangerous keeper...

The warning on the cave entrance says something to the effect of 'Pleze do not enter – Danger – Pit of da KRITTER' in the Goblin tongue. A character that does not understand Goblin may make a Decipher Script check (DC 15) to identify it as an urgent warning of great danger.

Creatures (EL 3)

During the last months, a horrendous underground monster, referred to only as The Creature, has taken residence in the cave. Those who have survived an encounter with it describe The Creature as the cross of a worm and a demonic ant, given the size of a dragon by a dark deity; in any event, the creature seems to actually be a fearsome, unnameable abomination. At first, The Creature fed on rats and vermin, until it found out it could catch unwary goblins and orcs. After the panic caused by The Creature's arrival, the mine's smarter denizens have learned to avoid its cave and even post warnings against nearing it. Therefore, The Creature is starting to venture outside the cave, hunting in the nearby tunnels.

The Creature (Ankheg): hp 28; see 'Ankheg' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The Creature attacks anyone that enters its cave.

Treasure

The debris on the cave includes both old mine garbage and The Creature's own gathered refuse. A successful Search check (DC 15) reveals 1d3 melee weapons (falchions or morningstars), 2d4 gold pieces and 2d10 pieces of silver ore (worth 1d6+4 gp each) among the trash.

A8: Neglected Passage

This tunnel looks even dirtier and more neglected than the others, its beams rotted, greying and filled with cobwebs.

The goblins that took over **Area B** have seen no need to occupy this area, which has become infested with vermin. Other than that – and the cobwebs – it is the same as the condemned mine tunnels in the areas labelled **A2**.

Creatures (EL 1)

Two dog-sized tarantulas have settled in this dungeon area. They leap on any creature entering their tunnel.

Small Monstrous Spiders (2): hp 4 each; see the corresponding section in the *MM*, Chapter Three: Vermin. Note: Tarantulas are hunters rather than web spinners.

A9: Dark Tunnel

Despite the overall darkness already prevailing in the mines, this is doubtlessly their darkest section so far. Even torches and lanterns seem dimmed by this overwhelming pit of darkness that makes your neck hairs raise instinctively.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

This pitch-black tunnel actually descends a few feet before reaching a dead end. It is quite dark; darker than anywhere else in the entrance caves, though the darkness itself is not magical, being instead due to the zone's greater depth and its angle towards natural light sources.

Creatures (EL 1)

This dark pit is home to a nightmarish creature the goblins refer to only as the Creepy Eater. The Creepy Eater, the local rumour says, lives only in the deepest darkness – such as this passage – where it waits for hapless victims to devour. According to the goblins, the Creepy Eater would be composed of nothing but wicked eyes, slimy tentacles and formless darkness, topped by endless hunger. The Creepy Eater attacks any lone creature that enters this area; it remains hidden if the intruder party seems particularly numerous or powerful. For this reason, all expeditions sent to ascertain the truth behind the Creepy Eater rumour have failed to discover anything and therefore its existence remains unproven to all but the most superstitious goblin scouts.

The Creepy Eater (Darkmantle): hp 7; see 'Darkmantle' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The Creepy Eater attacks by using its darkness ability and leaping on surprised opponents.

A10: Larger Cave

This mine cave has an area of roughly 1,000 square feet. Its unworked, solid stone walls and floor suggest it was here before the mine; however, there is a well with a masonry rim on the floor.

Closer inspection reveals a line of metal rungs down the pit, allowing a man-sized creature to safely descend to whatever is below.

This natural cave was used by the builders of the fortress at **Area B** as an entrance, centuries before the Morudhain built the mine above it. The round pit in the middle of the floor leads down, via a line of metal rungs, to the entrance passage leading in turn to Areas **A11-A15** and, subsequently, to the fortress at **Area B**. The Athan architects that built the fortress also built the pit, the passage and the adjoining chambers; however, a successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 17) is required to reveal the pit's ancient origin. A successful Survival check (DC 15) reveals the pit has been used quite often and quite recently, both to ascend and to descend.

Creatures (EL 1)

This cave is home to a couple of gigantic maggots, which the goblins have neither disturbed nor tamed so far. The monstrous vermin dispose of the goblins' trash and, quite regularly, their intruders as well; a dead goblin or two a month is a high but acceptable price to pay for such a commodity.

Gigantic Maggots (2 Medium Monstrous Centipedes): hp 4 each; see Chapter 3 in the *MM*

The maggots attack any living thing that enters their lair, regardless of its race or size. They have no treasure, as the goblins clean everything the maggots cannot digest.

A11: Entrance Hall

You reach a worked masonry chamber, about 20 feet per side. Its walls, adorned with monster-shaped bas-reliefs and carvings, seem very old. There are two exits from this chamber; a flight of stairs on the west wall and two open passages to the north and south.

There are three vicious-looking dogs at the south-western corner of the chamber, tied to the wall with chains attached to their leather collars. They furiously bark at you as you enter.

This is the first of the chambers leading to the fortress at **Area B**; it was originally meant as an entrance hall to said fortress. Now the goblins use it as their main defence point, where they usually gather to repel any threat of invasion. The carvings on its walls are crude, yet imposing, indicating the hand of a warlike culture on their construction.

Creatures (EL 1 or EL 5)

Carve, Crack and Chomp, the three guard dogs tied to the wall, start barking madly if they detect an approaching intruder; this may be avoided with some preparation, as the dogs are easily spotted before entering the chamber. The beasts themselves are not that great a danger, as their chains prevent them from moving to the north and east extremes of the room, allowing an intruder to avoid them somewhat easily. The dogs' real danger is their bark, which is indeed worse than their bite since it may call more creatures to the area.

Carve, Crack and Chomp (3 Dogs): 6 hp each; see the corresponding section in the *MM*, Chapter Two: Animals.

If the dogs are allowed to bark for one round or more, there is a 10% chance they attract one of the goblin squads stationed in areas **A14**. If the dogs bark for more than two rounds they attract the attention of *all* the goblins from all **A14** areas, plus the orcs at areas **A12-A13** and Sergeant Gurgah from **A15**. All of these reinforcements reach the area 1d3 rounds after the dogs have barked for three full rounds. The dogs content themselves with these warning barks, unless an intruder comes within reach of their chains (roughly 15 feet); in this case, they attack viciously.

A12: Orc Barracks

This stone room has three dirty, ruinous cots, with rotting food littered about the floor and obscene graffiti on the

THE UPPER DUNGEON

walls. An armoured orc warrior stands up from one of the cots and quickly lunges for his weapon.

This room houses the three orc guards stationed to guard **Area A**. Here, the orcs enjoy a somewhat privileged existence among their goblin inferiors. The room is a dirty barracks, with barely enough room for the three orcs, their cots and their possessions. The door is always closed but never locked.

Wooden Door: 1½ in. thick; hardness 5; 15 hit points; AC 5; Break DC 16.

Creatures (EL ½+)

The orc guards living in these barracks take turns to watch the stash at **Area A13**, with two orcs serving guard duty while the third one rests in this room. At least one orc warrior may always be found here; depending on the time, there may be up to two more orc guards getting ready for a turn shift. As a rule of thumb, consider there is a 75% of finding only one orc in the barracks, and a 25% chance of finding 1d3 orcs instead. As soon as an intruder enters their room, any orcs inside it attack him without hesitation.

Orc Guards (1-3 1st Level Orc Warriors): hp 5 each; see 'Orc' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

If only one or two orc guards are in the room at the moment, they attempt to scream for their companions at **Area A13** as they attack.

Treasure

All of the orc guards' possessions are here, stashed in chests and bags scattered around the room. In all, there are 62 silver pieces, 4 gold pieces and 5 javelins, as well as the melee weapons and armour of any orcs currently in the room. There is also a copy of the keys to **A13** hidden in a secret compartment below one of the cots. Finding this compartment requires a successful Search check (DC 20).

A13: Goblin Stash

This room houses a few sacks and coffers, surely containing loot from whoever occupies this area. Two burly orc warriors are standing guard over the hoard.

This is where the goblin company stores the wealth plundered from the old mine, as well as their wages from the fortress at **Area B** and whatever they have managed to steal from hapless travellers. The well-made stone walls and floor make this room seem ill-suited to hold dirty coffers and bags, indicating it was built for a different purpose. Its sturdy wooden door has been reinforced and locked.

Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; 20 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 20; Break DC 25.

Creatures (EL 1)

As soon as an intruder appears, both orc guards attack ferociously, screaming and making as much noise as they can so as to arouse the guards at **Areas A12** and **A14**. Note that if three orcs were already found at **Area A12**, then there are no orc guards here.

Orc guards (2 1st Level Orc Warriors): hp 5 each; see 'Orc' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

The treasure guarded by the orcs consists of 90 gold pieces, 450 silver pieces, 1501 copper pieces and 600 gp worth of raw silver ore. In addition, there are three flasks of alchemist's fire and a suit of masterwork scale mail. Each orc carries a falchion and three javelins, plus a suit of Medium studded leather armour.

A14: Goblin Rooms

This small room seems like an old masonry strip, fitted to house two Small creatures – and two very dirty ones at that. There are two little cots, two heaps of bags and weapons and an unlit torch on the wall. The room is barely five feet across and twice as deep; it has no door, indicating it was meant not as separate quarters but as part of the main hallway.

These are the living quarters of the goblins stationed to serve at the entrance caves guard. There are four such rooms in the entrance caves, each of them typically holding two goblins.

Creatures (EL ½+)

Unless they have been dealt with recently, there are always two goblin soldiers in each of these rooms. There are a total of ten goblins in **Area A**; any goblins encountered outside of these rooms are subtracted from that number and, therefore, from the goblins found here. If any of the rooms labelled **A14** is attacked, the goblins at the other three rooms notice immediately and arrive to reinforce their companions after 1d2 rounds. Once this happens, Sergeant Gurrpah (**A15**) is also alerted and reaches the area after an additional 1d2+1 rounds.

Goblin Soldiers (1st Level Warriors, usually 2): hp 5 each; see 'Goblin' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Each of these rooms holds the possessions of the goblins assigned to it. One of these rooms has 3d10 silver pieces, as well as 1d3 Small javelins and, of course, the armour and weapons of any goblins found here.

Air: Fortress Entrance

The incredibly tall stone walls of this great square room are carved and adorned like a castle's entrance hall, although the chamber seems quite old and deteriorated now. There is a large iron door on the far wall of the chamber and two rows of half-columns lining the east and west walls. The east wall is adorned with a dark blue banner depicting a lightning bolt. Other than that, the room has an oppressively bare look, retaining little of what was its former splendour. The strangest thing about the whole chamber is what is clearly a makeshift bed, no matter how out of place that may seem, on the room's south-eastern corner.

This was once the antechamber to the Athan High Fortress at **Area B**, now overtaken by goblins. At present, this room's only remarkable feature is the new reinforced door installed by the fortress' current owners. That, and Sergeant Gurrghah, the bugbear taskmaster assigned to command the goblins and orcs in this area. This is Sergeant Gurrghah's adopted room, where he eats, sleeps and supervises the activities of all the humanoids under his command. The large reinforced door leads to **Area B1**.

Reinforced Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; 60 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 25; Break DC 28.

Creatures (EL 2)

Unless he has already been dealt with, the Sergeant is in this room roughly 75% of the time. The remaining 25% is spent patrolling **Area A** and reporting to his superiors at **Area B**. If the sergeant is in the room, he is usually awake and ready for a fight, despite what might be indicated by the homely furniture forced into the chamber.

Sergeant Gurrghah (Bugbear): hp 16; see the *MM*, Chapter 1.

As soon he sees intruders enter his chamber, Sergeant Gurrghah marches to the attack, attempting to keep enemies at bay with javelin shots until it is time for melee. If possible, he attempts to yell for his subordinates to come aid him, although he is experienced enough to know that if an intruder has gotten as far as him, it is likely his subordinates are already dead.

Treasure

In addition to his weapons and armour, sergeant Gurrghah always carries a *potion of invisibility*, plus a copy of the keys opening the doors at areas **A13** and **A15**. He also keeps 2 gems (worth 25 gold pieces each) and 225 gold pieces inside a chest under his bed.

Area B: Goblin Fortress

This underground bastion was once the highest outpost of the Athan civilisation, a stronghold intended to defend the upper access to the Athans' mountain. Now it serves as a refuge for the Stormcloud Company, an army of goblin zealots and mercenaries.

The only known way to reach this area is via the great door from **Area A15**, though a number of secret passages are rumoured to exist.

B1: Entrance Chamber

You enter a large rectangular chamber with two arched rows before the east and west walls. The high walls are – or used to be – full of carvings and bas-reliefs; there are two reinforced doors on each wall. 15 feet above the ground, an arched balcony overlooks the chamber from the east, south and west walls. Something is moving on that balcony.

This 50 foot by 70 foot chamber is a typical example of Athan architecture; square, functional and austere in form, though fancy in carving and decoration. There is a row of arched columns within five feet of each of its western and eastern walls. The carvings are quite old and all but undecipherable now, though a successful Search check (DC 25) reveals they represented monstrous figures and mythical beasts.

The far wall has two closed (but unlocked) doors flanking a flight of stairs. Both the east and west walls have a set of double iron doors on their north end and a single wooden door at the south. The sets of double doors lead to chambers **B2** and **B3**, while the doors flanking the stairway lead to **B7**. The remaining two doors lead to the barrack tunnels. The stairs lead to the balcony at **B4**, which surrounds this chamber from a height of 15 feet.

As soon as any intruder enters this chamber, he calls the attention of either or both of the orc guards at **Area B3** and the goblin archers at **B4**.

Creatures (EL 1)

All the goblin archers at the **B4** areas have a full view of the chamber from their balcony and may make ranged attacks against intruders. They may not be targeted with melee attacks unless these have a reach surpassing 15 feet; otherwise, the only way to engage these goblin archers in melee is using the stairs to climb to the balcony at **B4**. Also see **B4** for the combat statistics of goblin archers.

B2: Barracks

You enter a moderately lit bunker, containing four barely used straw cots and a lit torch on the far wall. The

THE UPPER DUNGEON

The Goblin Fortress as a Dungeon

The entire goblin fortress is made of ancient, sturdy masonry, built to last and to protect the entire mountain. The walls have a thickness of one foot, hardness 8 and 90 hit points per square. Breaking down one of these walls requires a successful Strength check (DC 35).

Unless otherwise stated, all doors in the goblin fortress are made of reinforced wood, with a thickness of two inches, hardness 10, 40 hit points and a Break DC of 28. Those doors that are locked have an Open Lock DC of 20.

There are torches in most rooms and tunnels, set at 20-foot intervals; rooms with an area smaller than 20 feet always have at least one torch. These torches provide dim light for all **Area B**. The only exceptions are areas **B26-B28** and **B32**, which are unlit natural tunnels.

A character versed in Athan culture may recognise the masonry as being of Athan origin by a successful Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check (DC 10).

Random Encounters in the Goblin Fortress

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area B**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 25% chance of encountering a group of fortress guards, randomly determined or chosen from the following table:

square, ornate stone walls suggest the room was built for some purpose other than holding dirty cots and their inhabitants.

These rooms have been adapted as barracks for the humans, orcs and goblinoids that make up the army occupying the fortress. There are many such rooms throughout the fortress, all of them alike; fitted with four cots for resting and a single torch for illumination. The doors are usually closed but not locked; the torches are lit even when the rooms are vacant.

Creatures (EL 1 or 2)

Whenever one of these barracks is entered, there is a 50% chance (01-50) of finding the room empty, a 35% chance (51-85) of finding it occupied by 1d3+1 orc guards and a 15% chance (86-100) of finding it occupied by 1d2 human mercenaries.

Orc Guards (1d3+1 1st level orc warriors): hp 5 each; see 'Orc' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Human Mercenaries (1d2): hp 6 each; see **Area B7**.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREA B

D%	Encounter
01-20	1d2 goblin soldiers ¹
21-35	1 orc guard ¹
31-50	1d2 human mercenaries
51-60	1d3+1 goblin soldier ¹
61-75	1d2+1 orc guards ¹
76-80	1d2 hobgoblin officers ¹
81-85	1d2 human elite guards
86-90	1 bugbear taskmaster ²
91-93	1 ogre watcher ²
94-96	1 worg and 1d2 goblin soldiers ¹
97-99	1 bugbear taskmaster, 1 worg and 1d3+1 goblin soldiers ¹
00	Roll twice, ignoring any 00 results

¹ 1st level warriors.

² no class levels.

All of the above encounters are in addition to, and independent from, the keyed encounters on numbered areas.

The statistics for all these monsters may be found in the corresponding sections of Chapter One of the *MM*, except for the human mercenaries, whose statistics are described in **Area B7**, and the human officers, described at **B14**.

Treasure

These barracks are usually devoid of anything of value; however, orc guards and human mercenaries encountered there usually hold 1d3 gold pieces each in addition to their armour and weapons.

B3: Guard Post

The doors to this solid guard room are open wide, showing a well-equipped barracks with four armed orc guards inside. As they see you, the orcs immediately stand up, a hostile glow in their eyes.

This ancient guardroom used to be occupied by Athan soldiers; now it is used as a post for orc guards to watch the fortress' main entrance from **A15**. Four orc guards live and stand watch here, forbidden from leaving this post except to defend the fortress from attack. The room is equipped with four straw mats, four wooden stools, a table and a lit torch. The doors to the room are usually open wide, so the orcs can easily see anything happening in the great entrance.

Creatures (EL 2)

Four orc guards are stationed here at all times, ready to leap to the defence of the fortress.

Orc Guards (4 1st Level Orc Warriors): hp 5 each; See 'Orc' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

There is no treasure in this room except for the orcs' possessions (their armour and weapons plus 1d3 gold pieces each).

B4: Entrance Balcony

You walk up the stairs until you reach a stone balcony surrounding and overlooking the southern half of the entrance chamber. There are three stairways leading down from this gallery; one of them is directly connected to the entrance chamber, which is fully visible from here; the other two lead down to unknown passages to the east and west. From here you can also see the three goblin archers firing down upon intruders from behind the balcony's cover. As you walk up the stairs, they aim at you instead...

Each of the areas labelled 'B4' is actually the post of a goblin sniper, stationed in the balcony over **Area B1** to watch (and usually shoot against) any creature entering the fortress. The stone balcony offers cover (+4 cover bonus to Armour Class) to any creature stationed there.

Creatures (EL 1)

A single goblin archer occupies each of the B4 Areas:

Goblin Archer (1st Level Goblin Warrior): CR 1/3; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16*, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -3; Atk +2 melee (1d4+1/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d6/x3, longbow); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4+1/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d6/x3, longbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -1; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Ride +6, Spot +2; Alertness.

*While using the balcony as cover, the goblin has a total Armour Class of 20.

Possessions: Short sword, longbow, quiver with 20 arrows, studded leather armour, 1d6 silver pieces.

The goblins are trained to fire down upon intruders but also to help each other should those intruders climb up the stairs; if enemies close in on them, they concentrate their fire upon the closest enemy until he is down and then continue firing at the targets below.

B5: Goblin Guardrooms

This guardroom looks old and decayed, though it is clearly still being used by something. There are four crude beds on the floor, as well as a few bags and other containers. A torch mounted on the wall gives faint illumination to the area.

These rooms were the original guard barracks of the Athan fortress; now they are assigned to the goblin soldiers manning the area. The doors to these rooms are just barely closed and never locked.

Creatures (EL 1/2)

There are usually 1d6-2 (minimum of 0) goblin soldiers inside one of these barracks. If any goblin soldiers are encountered in the room, they immediately attack anything they perceive as an intruder.

Goblin Soldiers (1d6-2 1st Level Warriors): hp 5 each; see 'Goblin' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

If the goblins inside any of these rooms are attacked, they attempt to call for reinforcements; if they succeed, the goblins in all the other **B5** rooms, as well as the orcs from **B6**, hear the disturbance and arrive at the attacked room after 1d2 rounds. Even if the attacked goblins fail to emit their warning, there is a default 10% chance the goblins on the other **B5** rooms notice the attack and intervene. If allowed, the goblins take this opportunity to sound an alarm, alerting the entire fortress about the attack.

Treasure

These rooms have no treasure except for the goblin's possessions (armour, weapons and 2d6 silver pieces each).

B6: Orc Taskmasters

This is a well-furnished, well-lit guardroom, with two separate alcoves; each of which contains an austere bed. A single torch provides dim illumination to the area. There are two tough-looking orcs here, sitting on a wooden bench in front of a table. They look at you angrily...

This room, a little larger than its neighbouring barracks, was originally meant for officers of the Athan army; it is currently used by orc taskmasters assigned to control the goblins at **B5**. The furniture – two beds, a wooden bench and table – is of somewhat better quality than in the other guardrooms; not that the orcs have a great appreciation for such details. The door is closed but not locked, although the goblins have learned the consequences of entering without knocking first.

Creatures (EL 1)

There are always two orc taskmasters stationed here, ready to fight against any intruder.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

Orc Taskmasters (2 1st Level Orc Warriors): hp 5 each; see ‘Orc’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Any commotion in this area attracts the immediate attention of all goblins from **B5**, although they just might choose not to help their taskmasters; they have not been the kindest of masters, after all.

B7: Main Hall

This is a simple, square stone room, with engraved walls and a tall floor. It must have been an imposing chamber in its heyday; currently nothing remains but faded carvings. There have been a few clear attempts to refurbish the place, as the doors appear fully functional and some stools and tables have been added to make it somewhat less bare. Several candelabras provide an eerie but good illumination. A dark blue lightning bolt has been etched on some of the walls. There are two doors on the north wall and another two on the south, all of them made of reinforced wood. Amidst all this, three armoured men march towards you, brandishing their battleaxes.

This hall lies just below the **B4** balcony and past the guard barracks areas, leading directly into the inner fortress. It is furnished with six wooden chairs and two wooden tables, as well as six candelabras that provide shadowy light to the entire chamber.

Creatures (EL 2)

Three human mercenaries, hired by the Stormcloud Company to reinforce its goblinoid troops, stand on permanent guard in this room, under orders to prevent the passage of any intruder. They attack immediately unless given an excellent reason not to.

Human Mercenaries (3 1st Level Human Fighters): CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d10+1; hp 5, 6, 7; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/x3, battleaxe) or +1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/x3, battleaxe) or +1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +3, Listen +1, Spot +1; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (battleaxe).

Possessions: Battleaxe, breastplate, heavy steel shield, light crossbow, case with 10 crossbow bolts, 2d6 gp.

The mercenaries are pretty overconfident, believing they can handle any threat. They do not see a need to warn the rest of the fortress unless their opponents prove themselves surprisingly capable.

B8: Old Shrine

This stone room looks somewhat older and more wrecked than the others, although the remains of a dais and altar are still discernible. The carvings on its walls and the ruined altar are reminiscent of dragons; the place reeks of rank urine and half-eaten food. Huddled at the foot of the altar, wrapped in a ragged priest’s tunic, what appears to be a shaggy man trembles violently as if crying... then the creature raises its head, revealing the face of a grinning hyena...

This was an altar to the Dragon Lord, where Athan soldiers conducted their religious rites. Centuries of raids and abandonment were not kind to the temple, leaving a ravaged husk of what had been a well-built chapel. The place is all but useless to the Stormcloud Company, so it has been left to the care of the sanctimonious madman known only as Howler the Hyena. Howler has re-lit the old candelabra, swept the rubble and put the ravaged altar back in business – or so he believes.

A successful Search check (DC 15) reveals a secret compartment at the base of the altar. The shape and size of this compartment suggest it was made to hold a very specific relic – a tablet or maybe a framed icon – however, now it serves only to stash Howler’s possessions.

Creatures (EL 2)

Howler the Hyena is thus called because of the fact he *does* have a hyena’s head atop a generally humanoid body. He used to be an all-purpose servant for the Stormcloud leaders, until his ‘true calling’ surfaced and he turned to cheap mysticism (people always said he was quite barmy to begin with). Researching hedge wizardry and lesser rituals, he became convinced of his great power and arcane wisdom, asking to be called ‘The Hoary Howler’ from then on. Tired of Howler’s madness, his bosses arranged for him to be stationed at the old Dragon Lord’s shrine, which worsened Howler’s delusion; now, he is convinced he is the new prophet of the Dragon Lord, and his duty is to restore the fallen god’s faith to the world. Nobody takes him seriously, of course, although a couple of the orc officers have come to ask for blessings and listen to private masses just for a laugh.

Howler the Hyena/ The Hoary Howler, Prophet of the Dragon Lord (1st Level Gnome Adept): CR 2; Medium humanoid (gnoll); HD 2d8+2 plus 1d6+1; hp 15; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 9, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk +2 melee (1d8+1, morningstar); Full Atk +2 melee (1d8+1, morningstar); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref -1, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (religion) +0, Listen +6, Spot +5; Alertness, Iron Will.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

Spells Prepared (3/2; save DC = 11 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, guidance, read magic*; 1st—*bless, cause fear*.

Possessions: Howler always carries a normal morningstar (he says it is ‘blessed’) and an actual holy symbol of the Dragon Lord, though it is unknown where or how he obtained it. He has 31 silver pieces.

It is possible to approach Howler peacefully, though it is unknown what purpose might be served with such an approach; all he does is laugh stupidly and babble about the power of ‘The Dragon Lord, who lives below the earth’ and how he serves a ‘mightier god than the weak demon worshipped by the goblins’. Sadly, he knows little of the goblin god – he knows barely anything of the Dragon Lord, for that matter – so it is unlikely any worthwhile information can be obtained from him. As things are, Howler is nothing but a charlatan; his ‘magic’ tricks a weak imitation of true divine (or even arcane) powers.

Treasure

Howler keeps a stash of stuff in the hidden compartment below the ancient altar, including three smokesticks, four vials of unholy water (how he got these is also a mystery) and a single scroll page written in draconic. The contents of this page are detailed in page 23 of the book known as *Tales of Mount Moru*. Since Howler does not know anything about draconic, he believes its page is a sacred arcane text left by the Dragon Lord.

Bq: Inner Passage

At first it feels like this corridor is covered by magical darkness, as it appears darker than the others despite being lit by torches, which seem to illuminate less than they should; then the reason becomes clear – it is entirely made of black stone. A strong-looking door can be seen at the other end of the tunnel, no more than 40 feet away; between you and the door stands a hulking figure...

This corridor leads to **Area B12**, marking the beginning of the inner goblin fortress. It is completely made of black stone.

Creatures (EL 2)

A bugbear bodyguard has been stationed to guard this passage; it attacks anything it identifies as an intruder.

Bugbear Bodyguard: hp 16; see ‘Bugbear’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The bugbear attacks quietly, making no threats and attempting to dispatch its enemies as quickly and efficiently as possible. It carries no possessions except for its weapons and armour.

Bio: Orc Guardroom

This guardroom is relatively spacious, compared to other barracks and bunkers you have seen. There is no furniture except for a piece of log – visibly used as a table – and a few stools. A torch illuminates the area, causing flickering shadows to dance on the walls. Four armed orc guards stand up from the stools with hostile intentions...

These guardrooms are intended for orc soldiers on guard duty, as opposed to the neighbouring barracks, which are intended for rest and habitation. They have fewer furnishings and are located in such a way as to allow the guards to reach any of the nearby barracks fairly quickly, should the need arise.

Creatures (EL 2)

Four orcs are usually stationed in these guardrooms; if an alarm is sounded inside the fortress, these orcs are the ones expected to run and see what is happening, contrary to the ‘off-duty’ orcs in the barracks nearby. If any disturbance happens near their room, these orcs are sure to be the first to go out and meet it.

Orc Guards (4 1st Level Warriors): hp 5 each; see ‘Orc’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

In addition to his weapons and armour, each orc guard carries 1d4 gold pieces.

Bii: Mercenary Guardroom

This is a well-lit guardroom, with a candelabrum enhancing the light cast by the single torch of the wall; it contains a table, a linen cot and a couple of chairs. Two soldiers look at you with a mix of anger and surprise as they stand up...

These guardrooms are intended for those human mercenaries assigned to guard duty, chosen among the soldiers located in the nearby barracks. The guardrooms can comfortably hold two human guards for a night or two, though they are not equipped for a longer stay or a greater number of guards.

Creatures (EL 2)

These guardrooms always have two human mercenaries on guard. Should their employers need the service of the humans, these would be the first guards to be called, before their neighbours at the barracks. If any disturbance happens near their room, these mercenaries have the duty of coming out first to check it out.

Human Mercenaries (2 1st Level Fighters): hp 6 each; see **Area B7** for their statistics.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

Treasure

In addition to his weapons and armour, each mercenary carries 1d8 gold pieces.

B12: Inner hall

You enter a large stone chamber, with lines of arched columns covering the east and west walls. Beyond the columns, on the south wall, two doors lead out of the chamber, with another one located on the north wall. What appears to be a banner, depicting a dark blue lightning bolt, hangs from the south wall. The area is illuminated by torches, which create strange patterns with the arches' shadows. Or is it that something is actually moving among the columns...?

This hall was meant as the last bastion of defence before reaching the fortress' second level. Currently the Stormcloud Company uses the place for exactly that purpose, stationing a full goblin squad to guard the place.

The chamber has three doors; one on the north wall, leading to **Area B9**, and two on the south wall, both leading to **Area B13**. It has two lines of arched columns, in typical Athan architectural fashion. Several torches on the walls provide dim illumination.



Creatures (EL 2)

Six goblin soldiers are permanently stationed to guard this point. They are nearly always hidden (+5 bonus) among the column shadows; which means they attempt to ambush and surprise intruders rather than attack openly.

Goblin Soldiers (6 1st Level Goblin Warriors): hp 5 each; see 'Goblin' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The goblins always attempt to get a surprise round before anything else; if they succeed, they keep attacking silently and stealthily. Should the need for silence disappear, they immediately start shouting and calling for help, hoping to rouse the attention of the guards at **B13**.

B13: Inner hallway

You reach a dark hallway made of black stone, dimly illuminated by scattered torches on the walls. The tunnel ends in a descending staircase in both directions. Suddenly, you hear a noise and clatter coming from below...

This dark corridor is completely carved of black stone, just as the one at **Area A9**. Its torches are located far apart, giving it an even greater sense of gloom. The corridor runs 70 feet from east to west, ending in descending stairs on both ends. The stairs descend for roughly ten feet before reaching the next level.

Creatures (EL 3)

Three orc guards are stationed at each end of the corridor, near the stairways. As soon as they see intruders, all six orcs charge to catch them.

Orc Guards (6 1st Level Orc Warriors): hp 5 each; see 'Orc' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The orcs' strategy is fairly simple; three of them charge from each side of the corridor, forcing intruders to defend themselves against six orcs attacking from both sides.

If a fight against these orcs goes on for more than three rounds, the noise is likely to attract the attention of the guards at **B14** and **B15**.

B14: Western Stairs

These stairs descend until they reach another dark, dismal tunnel at the lower level of the fortress. As could be expected, an armoured guard stands watch here.

These stairs and the walls around them are pure black stone, which gives an eerie, gloomy dark ambience to the descent. They lead to the first dungeon level of the goblin fortress.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

Creatures (EL 2)

As soon as an intruder reaches the bottom of the stairs, a human elite guard walks out of the shadows, ready to fight and kill whatever he needs to.

Elite Guard (2nd Level Human Fighter): CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d10+4; hp 15; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/x3, masterwork battleaxe) or +3 ranged (1d6+2/x3, throwing axe); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/x3, masterwork battleaxe) or +3 ranged (1d6+2/x3, throwing axe); AL NE; SV Fort +5 Ref +1 Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +4, Listen +3, Sense Motive +2, Spot +3; Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (battleaxe).

Possessions: The elite guard carries a masterwork battleaxe, three throwing axes, a heavy steel shield and 53 gold pieces. He wears red and black banded mail. In addition, he has the key to all the dungeon cells on this level, including **Area B17**.

The elite guard is too honour-conscious to flee or surrender, so he still attempts to fight until the death, even if overwhelmed. If the orcs at **B13** have not been dealt with, they clamber down the stairs to help.

B17: Eastern Stairs

These stairs descend until they reach another dark, dismal tunnel at the lower level of the fortress. A lumbering humanoid mass seems to come out of the darkness...

These stairs and the walls around them are pure black stone, which gives an eerie, gloomy dark ambience to the descent. They lead to the first dungeon level of the goblin fortress.

Creatures (EL 3)

Ol' Gigh has been stationed to guard the bottom of these stairs and that is what Ol' Gigh is going to do. They say Ol' Gigh is not smart, though he will show them how smart he is by pulping the brains of their enemies. Ol' Gigh will attack any enemy that walks down the stairs. He is not afraid to get it wrong again, for Ol' Gigh has been taught the difference between goblin friend and foreigner enemy now. No more goblin bashing for Ol' Gigh. Unless it is enemy goblin... ah, this is too hard. Better something enemy comes down the stairs real fast so Ol' Gigh can pulp brains and be smart.

Ol' Gigh (Ogre): hp 29; see 'Ogre' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Ol' Gigh attacks relentlessly and stupidly, caring not about his enemy's strengths, weaknesses or numbers. If it looks like an enemy, Ol' Gigh pounds at it until one of them stops moving; there is no more to it than that.

Treasure

Ol' Gigh has virtually lived at this dungeon area, even eating and sleeping here, ever since he was ordered to guard it; therefore, all of his possessions are within easy reach. Ol' Gigh's stash includes 254 gold pieces and a suit of Medium nobles' clothes, worth about 250 gold pieces, which he cannot wear but for some reason carries everywhere.

B18: Dungeon Stairs

The walls along this tunnel are lined with prison cells. Amidst these cells there is a flight of descending stairs, leading to a deeper, darker passage...

Traps (EL 1)

There is a trap at this point: treading or pressing the stairs' first or second steps automatically causes a Huge hammer to swing down from the ceiling, battering any creature that stands in the way. The hammer swings back into the ceiling on the same movement, ready to fall down another time as soon as the steps are touched again.

Swinging Hammer Trap: CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +10 melee (4d6/x3, Huge swinging hammer); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 15. *Market Price:* 1,900 gp.

B19: Dwarf Prisoner

This cell appears to be occupied; at least something appears to move behind the bars; a shaggy, sad, dirty thing...

This is the only occupied cell in the entire goblin fortress; it holds Braldi, a dwarf prisoner. The cell door is locked and made of strong iron bars.

Iron Bars: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; 60 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 25; Break DC 28.

Creatures (EL 1)

Contrary to the typical policy regarding the treatment of prisoners at the fortress, Braldi has been spared so far; the goblin leaders suspect he is part of a larger force, so they have been attempting to force him to reveal the location of his people. However, torture has not broken the dwarf yet; it may mean he is actually holding something back or it may mean he is simply being stubborn about saying anything to goblins...

Braldi (1st Level Dwarf Fighter): hp 12 (currently 3); see Chapter Four in the *DMG* for Fighter NPCs' statistics.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

Braldi is chained to the wall. His chains have a hardness of 10 and 10 hit points, with a Break DC of 25. They may be opened with a successful Open Lock check (DC 20).

For more information about Braldi and the dwarven outpost, see page 18 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

B18: Empty Cell

This looks like an empty dungeon cell, the smell of ages-old dampness and decay mixed with the more recent reek of urine and refuse. It does not even look worthy of opening, even ignoring the fact the bars seem completely rusted shut.

The Stormcloud Company has no use for live prisoners, so virtually all their dungeon cells are empty. Some of the filthiest inhabitants of the dungeon have started using the cells as a latrine, which makes exploring these dungeons a truly disgusting job. The iron bars are old and rusty but are still quite serviceable.

Rusted Iron Bars: 2 in. thick; hardness 8; 50 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 23; Break DC 24.

B19: A Silver Tear

The description for this room is the same as the one given for B18 areas.

This, by all accounts, is a normal empty cell. However, it hides a strange relic from the ages of the Athan civilisation, though it is unlikely any explorer of the dungeon will find it anytime soon.

There is a secret trapdoor hidden among the mouldy, dirty cell floor; finding it requires a successful Search check (DC 35). Once found, opening it requires a successful Open Lock check (DC 30). The trapdoor covers a small one foot square niche. Inside the hidden niche there is a tear-shaped drop of pure silver, worth 10,000 gold pieces. This incredibly valuable item radiates no magic, though it is surely not an ordinary drop of silver. Perhaps other books might contain some more information about its nature and origin...

B20: The Dump

The awful, pungent smell of all kinds of waste dominates this octagonal stone room. Refuse piles litter the area. The few torches on the wall flicker violently as if about to explode at any moment. There are grimy wooden doors on the west and north walls and a barred iron gate to the east.

This is the waste disposal site for the fortress, a repulsive combination of latrine and garbage dump; its stench can be perceived even from the dungeon tunnel leading to it.

Its eastern iron gate is always closed but never locked; it sports a label, written in Common: 'Daengr – Waste'

There are garbage piles all over the chamber; the ground is sticky and wet. There are three torches, constantly agitated by the fouled air; four exits lead away from the room. The north exit is a wooden door leading to the caretaker's room; the east exit is an iron gate leading to the fortress' lower dungeon tunnels.

There is another wooden door to the west, this one labelled 'Daengr – do NOT disterve BIGGO' in clearly readable Common. The door emanates a particularly awful stench. It is locked, but the key hangs on the wall a few inches from the lock. This west door leads to **Area B21**.

Old Wooden Doors: 1 in. thick; hardness 5; 10 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 20; Break DC 15.

Rusted Iron Bars: 2 in. thick; hardness 8; 50 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 18; Break DC 24.

Finally, there is a secret door on the south wall; finding it requires a successful Search check (DC 20). It consists of a sliding stone panel, revealing an old access to a natural cave below the fortress...

Creatures (EL 3)

Durth, the dump caretaker, lives in the small room behind the north wall (**Area B20a**). He considers the dump his personal kingdom and brooks no visitors, violently expelling even Stormcloud soldiers from his domain. If he faces intruders, Durth attacks without thinking twice, glad for the chance to fully unload his crazed anger on someone.

Durth The Caretaker (Derro): hp 16; see 'Derro' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Durth carries a buckler, a short sword and a repeating light crossbow with 10 bolts (coated with greenblood oil; see Chapter Eight in the *DMG*). He wears a suit of stiff, mouldy clothes that have become hardened by sheer griminess (treat as studded leather armour). In addition, Durth keeps the following items in his room at **B20a**: 291 gold pieces, 3 flasks of alchemist's fire, trail rations for three days, a broom, a shovel, 20 feet of chain (hardness 10, 30 hit points), a saw (for cutting chain links) and three good quality locks, plus a copy of the keys that open the west door to **Area 21**, the barred gate to the east and his own room.

B21: Biggo's Den

This chamber stinks so awfully it is almost overwhelming. The room is completely unlit, receiving no other illumination than whatever comes from the garbage dump

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torches behind. A low growl sounds in the darkness, and suddenly it feels as if the stench has come alive...

This room holds Biggo, the fortress trash-eating monster; it serves no other purpose. It has no furniture or means of illumination; Biggo's continued presence has given the room such an unbearable stench that no other sensations seem to be needed when entering the chamber.

Creatures (EL 4)

Biggo is what the goblins call a 'trash-monster'. The creature, apparently made of pure organic waste, is kept near the dump and fed with the waste of the entire fortress, acting as a living disposal unit. Durth refers to Biggo as his 'pet'; in fact, Durth is the only living being that can enter Biggo's room without fear of being attacked, though nobody understands exactly why.

Biggo (Otyugh): hp 36; see 'Otyugh' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

If Biggo is attacked, it is likely Durth hears it and runs out to help his 'pet', arriving in 1d2 rounds.

B22: Hobgoblin Guard Post

This area, clearly built for another purpose, has now been turned into a sort of military barracks. There are two beds, a single wooden stool and a torch to illuminate the area.

These rooms used to be storage areas, bare entrance halls or simple corridors; they have now been adapted to house the Stormcloud's hobgoblin officers. They have two beds, a torch and some other piece of furniture, such as a stool or bench.

Creatures (EL ½ or 1)

All hobgoblin officers in the fortress are permanently stationed here; there are 1d2 hobgoblin officers on each area labelled **B22**, which immediately attack any intruder coming into their quarters.

Hobgoblin Officers (1 or 2 1st level Hobgoblin Warriors): hp 6; see 'Hobgoblin' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Each hobgoblin carries a longsword, three javelins, a light shield and 1d10 gold pieces. They wear studded leather armour. There are an additional 1d4x10 gold pieces in boxes and bags near the hobgoblins' beds.

B23: Junction

You approach a crossroads among the tunnels. There seems to be a written indication on the floor.

This crossroads hides a trap meant for anybody that attempts to decipher the writings on the floor. The trap is activated as soon as any creature spends more than five straight rounds standing on the crossroads centre or any of the four squares surrounding it. The writings are meaningless gibberish (Ysh Vahm Sakh Omerkh Omidh Tngh Chlkh Vith Ejhl Sintghm Pardghmk Khm Sgnfkth Smthk Rfj Khla Pathlg Khm Pradh Dhla S'stmthk Expn Nshl Rfj Laev Olush Ndh Loskha Rtnhds Cyclk... and so on) they are meant to trick intruders into standing near them long enough for the trap to activate. As soon as the trap is activated, five Large stone blocks hanging from chains fall from the ceiling with a loud crash, crushing any creature standing on any of the junction's five central squares. The chains then automatically lift the stone blocks back to their position.

Falling Stone Blocks: CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; onset delay 5 rounds; automatic reset; Ref save DC 20 avoids; Damage 3d6 (falling stone blocks); multiple targets (all targets in the junction's five central squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20. *Market Price:* 3,000 gp.

B24: Armoury

Under the torchlight, the numerous weapons and armour hanging from racks inside this chamber cast monstrous shadows all over the chamber's walls and floor. First the effect is scary, then it is just curious; then it becomes scary again as a very real growl comes from behind the racks...

The room is a 30 foot by 30 foot stone square, containing the arms and armour stores of the fortress. The western door to this chamber is locked (Open Lock DC 20); the eastern is only closed. The room is illuminated by torches, which cause the weapons and racks to cast monstrous shadows. These shadows hide the actual guardian of the room...

Creatures (EL 2)

Gorr, a bugbear-trained 'guard dog' (though he appears rather like some breed of monstrous wolf), has been chained to a wall among the weapon racks and given instructions to guard the place from intruders. He attacks anyone that enters the room other than his master, Burlibug (see **Area B25**).

Gorr (Worg): hp 30; see 'Worg' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

Gorr is chained to one of the walls, though the chain length allows him to reach any spot inside the chamber easily. During combat, Gorr attempts to growl and howl to warn Burlibug (from **Area B25**); if he succeeds, Burlibug arrives in 1d2+1 rounds.

Treasure

The room contains three Medium longswords, one Small longsword, 13 Medium short swords, four Small short swords, six Medium battleaxes, three Small battleaxes, one Medium greatclub, 19 Medium daggers, 12 Small daggers, 3 Medium morningstars, 8 Small morningstars, 23 Medium javelins, 13 Small javelins, two Medium light crossbows and a Small light crossbow in weapon racks, plus three Medium heavy steel shields hanging from the walls. All the shields have the Stormcloud Company symbol. In addition, there are five wooden dummies, four of which feature Medium suits of studded leather armour. A successful Appraise check (DC 20) or Craft (weaponsmith) check (DC 15) reveals one of the shields is of masterwork quality.

B25: Torture Chamber

The doors to this chamber are open wide, as if to flaunt its horrors to anyone wishing to enter. Inside there is a wide assortment of torture implements and other instruments of pain, including branding irons, a coal pit, iron maidens and a rack.

This is the fortress' torture and interrogation room, where prisoners are taken to reveal their secrets and die. The double doors leading to this area are almost always open, so that the screams from inside can be heard as far as possible. The room is lit by a mix of torches and candelabra, which give a red tint to its soot-blackened walls. Besides the common instruments of torture, there is a dirty cot, some food plates and a couple of wooden stools.

Creatures (EL 3)

Burlibug, the fortress' torturer, can usually be found in this chamber. He violently and sadistically attacks any intruder that comes into his chamber.

Burlibug The Executioner (1st Level Bugbear Fighter):

CR 3; Medium humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+6 plus 1d10+2; hp 27; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +3; Grp +10; Atk +7 melee (2d4+4 masterwork spiked chain) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +7 melee (2d4+4 masterwork spiked chain) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with spiked chain); AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +3, Intimidate +0, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Search +2, Sense Motive +1, Spot +3; Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Weapon Focus (spiked chain).

Possessions: Masterwork spiked chain, light crossbow, case with 10 crossbow bolts, banded mail.

Treasure

There are 245 gold pieces under his bed.

B26: First Mass Grave

This seems to be a natural cave, with no light sources at all. The ground seems to be earthy and uneven; an unexplained sense of ancient dread pervades the place. The cave entrance seems to have an inscription, though the darkness makes it hard to read.

The entrance to this natural cave reads 'Mass Grave' in Draconic. This is one of the caves that the Athans used, millennia ago, to bury their dead soldiers and slaves. The ground is made of ancient, rotting bones all covered with earth and rock; finding the remains requires a Search check (DC 10).

Treasure

A successful Search check (DC 25) might allow a character to find 1d4 gold pieces or a nondescript gem or piece of jewellery (worth 10 gp) among the dead.

B27: Second Mass Grave

This seems to be a natural cave, with no light sources at all. The ground seems to be made entirely of buried skeletons and rotting bones. The cave entrance appears to have an inscription, though the darkness makes it hard to read... and then something moves among the bones...

The entrance to this natural cave reads 'Mass Grave' in Draconic. This is the second of the caves used by the Athans to bury their dead of the lower castes. As B26, the ground here is practically made of ancient, rotting bones; however, in this cave the bones have been mostly removed and unearthed, giving the cave the appearance of a 'death dump'. A successful Search check (DC 25) might allow a character to find 1d4 gold pieces or a nondescript gem or piece of jewellery (worth 10 gp) among the dead.

Creatures (EL 1)

An undead creature has taken residence among these bones; it is not known whether it was put in here by the Athans, spawned from the bones by itself or arrived from elsewhere, drawn by the smell of death. The creature has been eating the dead bodies for many years, though the lack of actual meat in these dry, dusty bones has led it to hunt the living lately.

Ghoul: hp 13; See 'Ghoul' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

Treasure

A successful Search check (DC 25) might allow a character to find 1d4 gold pieces or a nondescript gem or piece of jewellery (worth 10 gp) among the dead.

B28: Tomb of The Tortured One

A huge amount of rubble blocks a section of the tunnel. It appears as a natural cave-in.

This is no natural rockslide but the tomb of a man, who was tortured into suicide by an unknown party many centuries ago. The rock blockade has been weakened by time, allowing a character to fit through openings in the rubble with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 15). Removing the rubble entirely requires roughly one hour of work. There is a small cave beyond the rocks; there are no light sources on it. There is a human skeleton chained to the far west wall by the right arm; he was chained here to die. The skeleton's left arm is bent unnaturally against his chest; closer inspection reveals an ancient, rusty dagger embedded in the ribcage at roughly the height of the heart.

Creatures (EL 3)

The shade of this tomb's unnamed victim still haunts the cave; it madly attacks anyone entering the area, as it gibbers incessantly in some ancient and forgotten tongue, with a squeaking, eerie voice.

Shade of the Tortured One (Allip): hp 26; see 'Allip' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The shade attacks until it is destroyed or there are no living victims in sight; however, it cannot leave the vicinity of its skeleton.

The unknown speech of the Tortured One is actually the Athans' Secret Tongue, once spoken by all the Athan priest caste but now lost for generations. A character familiar with the Ancient Athan culture may make a successful Decipher Script check (DC 25) or Knowledge (history) check (DC 25) to identify the Tortured One's speech as the Secret Tongue, though not to understand it. Should any special means (such as *comprehend languages*) be used to understand the Tortured One's maddening words, treat as if the user had contacted the allip's mind (as indicated on Chapter One of the *MM*). What he is trying to say is something to the effect of:

'Theyleftmeheretodiethyleftmeheretokillmyselftheymad emestabmyhearttheymademecausepaintomemademethey mademestabmyselfordietheyforcedmetodiechainedmet osuffocateordietostabmyselftheychainedmetosuffocateo rstabtheychainedmetheykilledmeIkilledmeIkilledIdiedIsta bbedpainthey...'

Nothing else can be learned from The Tortured One.

B29: The Arena

This square room looks like a gladiatorial arena, with a sand-covered stone floor and three rows of stone seats over the north wall. These steps are accessible via a stairway just outside the entrance. A banner, depicting the Stormcloud Seal of a lightning bolt on a dark blue background, hangs from the seated plateau; countless torches and lanterns hang from the walls. There are two iron gates leading out of the arena, one to the east and another to the south.

This 30 foot by 30 foot stone chamber was once used as a training camp for Athan soldiers. Area **B29a**, overlooking the main room, has three rows of stone seats, allowing a modest audience for the training sessions. Now, the whole area is a bloody arena where the prisoners of the goblin army, including their own criminals and deserters, are taken for a gory, brutal death at the hands of The Goblin Bull.

The arena itself has a sand-covered stone floor and is lit with at least 24 torches and lanterns hanging from the walls. The walls are 30 feet tall, except for the north wall, which reaches only about 25 feet up before giving way to the stone seats of Area **B29a**. A banner with the Stormcloud Company Seal hangs from this wall. Reaching the top of this wall requires a successful Climb check (DC 20) or Jump check (DC 25). Two iron gates lead out of the arena, both of them locked (Open Lock DC 25). The south gate leads to The Goblin Bull's cell (Area **B30**); the east gate leads to the corridors of the fortress and the stairs leading up to **B29a**.

Iron Gates: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; 60 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 25; Break DC 28.

Creatures (EL variable)

Most of the time the arena is empty, simply waiting for the next fight. When the Goblin Bull fights, however, it is always found in the arena, while a number of Stormcloud officers sit cheering at **B29a**. The audience almost always includes Akkal Tor (Area **B35**). The Goblin Bull's statistics can be found on Area **B30**.

B30: Pit of The Goblin Bull

This room exudes an acrid animal stench. It is unlit except for the lights coming from the two iron gates leading to it. Despite the darkness, there is no doubt something does live here...

This 20 foot by 20 foot stone room is the cell of the Goblin Bull, an ox-headed monster the goblins brought from faraway lands, used for gladiatorial fights and to punish criminals in the arena at **B29**. The room is filled with the creature's refuse and the remains of its meals. There are two iron gates on this room: the one in the north wall

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leads to **Area B29**, while the one in the east wall leads to a small chamber from which it is easy (and safe) to feed the monster. This small east chamber also has a lever on the wall; pulling on this lever automatically opens the gate on the north wall, allowing the Goblin Bull to enter the arena.

Creatures (EL 4+)

The small chamber to the east of **B30** is usually occupied by one or two goblins, temporarily employed as the Goblin Bull's feeders and caretakers.

Goblin Caretakers (2 1st Level Goblin Warriors): hp 5 each; see 'Goblin' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The Goblin Bull is usually found inside **B30**, except when it is fighting at the arena (**B29**). It attacks anyone that enters its cell, including its goblin caretakers.

The Goblin Bull (Minotaur): hp 39; see 'Minotaur' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The Goblin Bull has learned to live as a slave to the goblins, though if it found a chance to break free it would take it, exacting brutal revenge on its former masters. It hates everyone, though, so it would not hesitate to attack anyone standing on its path, including whoever freed it.

B31: Dwarven Outpost

It is strange to see such well-made stone passages and rooms inside such dirty, old natural caverns. These rooms, although precariously dug out of the caves' raw stone, have the mark of great engineering skill. They are also fully furnished and well-lit, making them look like comfortable long-term lodgings.

This area was dug out of the surrounding caves by a team of dwarves. Its walls and floors are of well-finished hewn stone, it is lit by few torches on the walls. It has enough furniture and provisions to accommodate 12 characters for prolonged periods.

Creatures (EL 4+)

11 dwarven soldiers and miners live here, all of them survivors from the flooded mines at **Area E**. When they found the Athan fortress, which they thought abandoned, blocked by a goblin fortress, the dwarves erected this small outpost and started making plans to undermine the goblins' strength from their 'back door' into their fortress. Braldi, the prisoner at **B17**, was once one of the leaders of this band. The dwarves are only hostile towards the Stormcloud Company; they may even ally with a third party against their common enemy.

Dwarven Miners (11 1st Level Dwarf Warriors): hp 6 each; see 'Dwarf' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Besides their weapons and armour, the dwarves have a great assortment of mining tools such as lanterns, oil, pickaxes, shovels and torches. They also have a large food stock, equal to more than one year of trail rations; all this they gladly share with any ally they might meet in the tunnels. What they will not share for any reason are the treasures they rescued from their lost mine – 1,000 gold pieces in gold ore, hidden in secret compartments below their beds. Finding these compartments requires a successful Search check (DC 27).

For more information about Braldi and the dwarven outpost, see page 18 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

B32: Exit Tunnel

This tunnel is partially blocked by rubble; it seems to go on beyond the blockade.

This tunnel is a direct exit to the surface, partially blocked by the dwarves at **B31** via a provoked landslide. Going over the rubble takes one full minute for a Medium character, doubling this time for each category the creature is smaller than Medium. A Large or larger creature cannot fit through the rubble. Clearing the passage requires roughly one full day of work with the right tools, or up to five days without tools. Large and Huge creatures require only 2d6 hours to clear the rubble, regardless of the tools; Gargantuan or larger creatures barely fit in the tunnel at all. The tunnel leads out of **Area B** entirely and descends towards the lower caves at **Area C**.

B33: Temple Access

You have just discovered a secret masonry tunnel, lit by torches at regular intervals. The tunnel ends in what appears to be a stone wall to the west and a flight of descending stone steps to the east.

This hidden passage connects the Fortress' throne room with the lower temple levels. A secret door to the west (treat as an unlocked, reinforced wooden door) leads to **Area B34**; a descending stone staircase to the east leads to **Area D**. Only Akkal Tor, his hobgoblin officers and the goblin priests housed at **Area D** know the existence of this tunnel; it is otherwise a secret for everyone at the Stormcloud Company. The tunnel is moderately lit by torches hanging from the walls.

Traps (EL 3)

There is a trap on the square immediately preceding the descending staircase; any creature stepping on this square without first pressing a switch in one of the wall bricks causes it to activate. When this trap is activated, Huge stone wheels partially roll out of the walls in opposite directions, crushing anything that stands between them.

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Stone Wheel Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); Reflex save DC 20 avoids; damage 5d6 (stone wheels); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 25. *Market Price:* 7,500 gp.

B34: Throne Room

You enter a long chamber made of ornate carved stone, flanked by columns left and right. In one end of this room there is a big stone chair atop a low dais, also made of stone. The room is adorned with various flags and banners with the symbol of a lightning bolt over an indigo-black background. There is what appears to be a dog, chained to the base of the throne. There are two exits from this room; a large double door on the west wall and a smaller one on the southeast corner.

This is the fortress' throne room, where Akkal Tor and the Goblin God, revered by his people, hold their public appearances. It is entirely made of the sumptuously carved stone so loved by Athan architects, now draped in the flags and banners of the Stormcloud Company. Torches and candelabras give good light to the entire chamber. The room may be accessed via a double reinforced wood gate past a hobgoblin guard post (B22) to the west, and a secret door behind a curtain (Search DC 25) leading to Area B33 to the east. Another door on the easternmost end of the south wall leads to Akkal Tor's quarters at B35.

The Throne of the Fortress, currently belonging to Akkal Tor, is a high stone chair, located on a dais atop a three-step stair. Chained to this throne is Firestorm, Akkal Tor's pet. A few feet away from firestorm there is a metal plate with half-eaten, charred meat and bones – firestorm's food.

Unknown to absolutely anyone currently living at the fortress, there is a secret compartment below the throne; finding it requires a successful Search check (DC 30). Inside this compartment there is a tear-shaped drop of pure gold, worth 10,000 gold pieces. This is no common gold nugget, yet it radiates no magic. Perhaps other books might contain some more information about its nature and origin...

Creatures (EL 3+)

Firestorm, a demonic dog Akkal Tor adopted as a pet, is chained to the throne in this room. It attacks any living thing that comes within 30 feet of the throne unless Akkal Tor is present, in which case it only attacks if given an order to do so. Unless he has already been dealt with, there is a 25% chance Akkal Tor (Area B35) is also present in the room.

Firestorm (Hell Hound): hp 22; see 'Hell Hound' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Firestorm's chains are 30 feet long; it cannot reach any creature beyond this range, except with its breath weapon.

B35: Akkal Tor's Room

You enter a large, well-lit room with a large bed, a closet, a round wooden table and two chairs. There are expensive curtains and torch sconces on the walls.

This chamber is the home of the mastermind behind the Stormcloud Company – Akkal Tor, the Goblin General. The room is lit by torches on ornate sconces and decorated with curtains and banners sporting the Stormcloud Seal (a lightning bolt on a dark indigo background). There is a large bed against the east wall, as well as a closet on the north wall and a wooden table with two chairs on the southwest corner. There is a small chest hidden below the bed (Search DC 10), containing Akkal Tor's possessions. The lock on this chest has an Open Lock DC of 25 and a break DC of 28.

Creatures (EL 6)

Unless he has already been dealt with, Akkal Tor is here, resting or making plans for future conquests. He is not above parleying with a hostile force; however, he almost always uses any semblance of peacefulness to distract his opponents and somehow gain the upper hand.

Akkal Tor, The Goblin General (2nd level half-dragon bugbear fighter): hp 58; More information on Akkal Tor may be found in page 109 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Besides the armour, weapons and other equipment he always carries with him, Akkal Tor carries a ring of keys inside a hidden pocket; finding this pocket requires a successful Search check (DC 15) on Akkal Tor's body. The keys open the chest under the Goblin General's bed, as well as each and every locked door in Areas B or D.

Akkal Tor's chest contains his share of the plunder so far obtained by the Stormcloud Company, which consists of 1,064 gold pieces among five leather bags, four small emeralds (worth 450 gp each) and a golden medal with the Stormcloud Company seal engraved on it (worth 325 gold pieces). In addition, the chest contains maps and notes indicating Akkal Tor's conquest plans, plus an inventory of the fortress' soldiers, goods and defences. More information about these notes may be found in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 24.

Area C: Lost Tunnels

These are a series of mostly unexplored tunnels below the goblin fortress. They are inhabited mainly by grimlocks, though some other underground denizens also populate them.

Reaching this area requires descending from the tunnel at **B32** or the secret access from **D7**, both of them long hidden from the goblin army living at **Areas B** and **D**. It may also be reached from the lost dwarven mine passage at **E3**.

C1, C2: Entrance Caves

You reach an area of unlit, natural underground caves. Strange sounds float through the darkness...

These caves are simply the accesses between **Area C** and the near levels. **C1** slowly ascends to the tunnel at **B32**, while **C2** leads immediately to a secret passage at **D7**.

C3: Flooded Passage

The ground in this passage is muddy and filthy, full of small pools and ponds. A rank, wet odour emanates from the other side.

This tunnel leads to the flooded dwarven mines at **Area E**. It connects directly to the mine entrance at **E3** after a one-hour walk.

C4: Grimlock Caves

You reach a dark cave, full of strange noises and the presence of living things. The area has an earthy, musty smell.

These lightless caves are home to the numerous grimlocks living in the area; they feature two or three animal hide bedrolls and a separate area for refuse.

Creatures (EL 1+)

Each of these caves houses 1d4 grimlock adults plus 1d4+2 children (non-combatants). Adults attack without hesitation as soon as an intruder enters their cave.

Grimlocks (1d4): hp 11 each; see 'Grimlock' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

Treasure

Each of these caves has a treasure pile containing 2d10x10 gold pieces and 2d20x100 silver pieces among several animal-hide bags and bundles, plus edible fungi and dry meat equal to 1d6 weeks of trail rations.

C5: Grimlock Guard Post

You reach what seems to be a junction in these dark tunnels, from which many paths lead in all directions. Suddenly, without notice, a half-naked humanoid thing, brandishing a crude battleaxe, leaps at you...

These junctions are constantly watched by grimlock guard detachments; the grimlocks seem to fear something in these tunnels and intend to protect themselves against it.

Creatures (EL 2+)

There are always 1d2 grimlock guards in these areas, which attack immediately whenever they spot an intruder.

Grimlock Guards (1d2 1st Level Grimlock Barbarians): CR 2; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 2d8+4 plus 1d12+2; hp 21 each; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14); Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d8+3/x3, battleaxe); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+3/x3, battleaxe);

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These are natural caves; a single 20 foot by 20 foot section of wall here has hardness 8, Break DC 65 and 900 hp. The area lacks any doors or artificial constructions.

There are no light sources in this area; treat as total darkness unless an artificial light source is used.

Random Encounters in the Lost Tunnels

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area C**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering a hostile creature, randomly determined or chosen from the following table:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREA C

D%	Encounter
01-65	1 grimlock ¹
66-80	1d2+1 grimlocks ¹
81-95	1 grimlock guard
96-99	1 grimlock guard + 1d2+1 grimlocks ¹
00	1d2 skum

¹ 1st level warriors.

All of the above encounters are in addition to, and independent from, the keyed encounters in numbered areas.

The statistics for all of these monsters may be found in Chapter One of the *MM*, except for grimlock guards, whose statistics appear in **Area C5**.

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SA rage 1/day; SQ blindsight 40 ft., immunities, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Listen +5, Spot +5; Alertness, Power Attack, Track^B.

Possessions: Stone battleaxe, 2 unidentified gems (25 gp each).

Cb: The Fury's Cave

This cave smells like a slaughterhouse; walking closer, it seems like many bundles of dead meat hang from the cave's roof. Among these bundles, a menacing figure approaches...

A particularly fierce and powerful grimlock, referred to by his brethren as the Fury, has set up his lair in this cave and no one has dared to try and remove him. The cave is decorated with the grisly remains of other grimlocks; mostly those who have dared defy the Fury.

Creatures (EL 4)

The Fury is a blood-crazy monster; he does not hesitate to attack and kill anything that moves. He assaults anyone entering his cave, eager for a new challenge.

The Fury (3rd Level Grimlock Barbarian): CR 4; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 2d8+6 plus 3d12+9; hp 43; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d12+4/x3,

greataxe); Full Atk +8 melee (1d12+4/x3, greataxe); SA rage 1/day; SQ blindsight 40 ft., immunities, scent, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Intimidate +4, Listen +8, Spot +6; Alertness, Power Attack, Track^B.

Possessions: The Fury always carries a greataxe and a necklace with grisly remains of his defeated enemies.

Treasure

The Fury's trophy stash, where he stores the treasure he has gathered from his kills, includes 478 gold pieces, 890 silver pieces and 105 copper pieces; plus a Medium chain shirt, a damaged but repairable suit of half-plate armour, a dwarven waraxe and a masterwork heavy mace.

C7: Pond Cave

Half of this cave's floor is flooded with filthy water of unknown origin. Something seems to move in this water.

This cave has been half-flooded by the pestiferous waters from **Area E**. By swimming below the water it is possible to reach the pool at **Area C8**.

Creatures (EL 2)

One of the Pond Master's fish slaves (see Areas **E8**, **E9** and **E17**) fled servitude and came to hide in the upper levels. Now the poor creature is mortally afraid of everything; it fears to return and face its master's punishment, it fears to stay and face the grimlocks and other monsters in these caves and it fears to go forward and face the unknown dangers of the upper world. It does not attack intruders without provocation, partly because it is tired of fighting and partly because it is mortally afraid of anything that moves.

Skum: hp 11; see 'Skum' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The fish slave prefers to flee than to fight; it uses an underwater passage to swim away to **Area C8**. Alternatively, the fish slave is willing to render services and give information in exchange for protection; it can communicate in Aquan. Right now it does not know what it wants to do, so if a character earns its trust it may be willing to accompany him anywhere except to **Area E**.

C8: Flooded Cave

The water pools in this cave are surrounded by slime and mud.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

The pools and eddies flooding half this cave have created a patch of filth and slime all over the cave. An underwater passage leads to the pool at **Area C7**.

Creatures (EL 2)

If the fish slave from **Area C7** was forced to swim away, it may be found hiding below the pool here.

Cq: Empty Cave

This cave is empty except for some rocks and pebbles strewn all over the ground.

This cave is nothing but a good place to rest safely for a while.

C10: Kalidri's Cave

Cobwebs hang from this cave, their thin strands can be felt on the face and body as one walks deeper inside it. Something glitters at the far end of the cave.

This cave belongs to Kalidri, an inhuman shapechanging witch. There are a few bones and refuse in a corner and a pile of web-wrapped treasure in another; other than this, the only features of this cave are the cobwebs that fill it.

Creatures (EL 4)

Kalidri is a witch, seemingly part grimlock and part spider, that shares the caves with the grimlocks without paying them much attention. If she sees intruders from outside, she attempts to capture them and steal their treasure, which she knows is often abundant. She does not need to kill her victims; most often she takes their belongings and lets them go with a warning.

Kalidri (Aranea): hp 22; See 'Aranea' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

Kalidri prefers to use her spells to mislead and confuse her enemies rather than attacking directly; when she needs to disable an opponent she prefers to use her webs.

Treasure

Kalidri has gathered considerable treasure from numerous hostages and victims throughout the years. This treasure includes 301 gold pieces, 1,309 silver pieces and three aquamarines worth 50 gp each, plus a scroll with a *deep slumber* spell.

C11: Bone Cave

This cave is littered with bones and remains, seemingly from the bodies of assorted humanoids.

This cave is where the so-called Goblin God has been escaping to for the last few weeks, using the secret

entrance from its quarters at **D7**. The cave is filled with the remains of creatures the Goblin God has been hunting in the tunnels, mostly grimlocks but also many other humanoids. A successful Search check (DC 10) reveals grimlock, goblin, orc, human and dwarven bones. The Goblin God's tracks leading to and from **D7** may be followed via a successful Survival check (DC 20).

Creatures (EL 5)

Unless he has been dealt with already, there is a 10% chance the Goblin God is actually here at the moment, eating the remains of some hapless victim; he attacks intruders immediately.

The Goblin God (Greater Barghest): hp 67; see 'Barghest' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

C12: Grimlock Leader's Cave

There appear to be several living things inside this dark cave; they all move agitatedly and fearsomely as you enter...

This is the main grimlock cave, where their brutal leader lives with his family and guards. The cave's features resemble those of all **C4** areas, except for its occupants.

Creatures (EL 6)

The grimlock leader is always found here, along with two grimlock guards, three common grimlocks and 10 non-combatants (mostly children). The guards surround any intruders threateningly but do not attack unless provoked.

Grimlock Leader (2nd Level Grimlock Barbarian): CR 3; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 2d8+4 plus 2d12+4; hp 30; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d8+4/x3, *grimstone*); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+4/x3, *grimstone*); SA rage 1/day; SQ blindsight 40 ft., immunities, scent, trap sense +1; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Intimidate +5, Listen +8, Spot +8; Alertness, Power Attack, Track^B.

Possessions: Grimstone (+1 battleaxe)

Grimlock Guards (2): hp 21 each; see **C5** for their statistics.

Grimlocks (3): hp 11 each; see 'Grimlock' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

The grimlock leader is far more cunning and sly than his typical brethren; he knows how to feign goodwill. Currently, he needs help with three problems faced by his people: The Fury, the ruthless murderer at **C6**; Kalidri, the spider witch at **C10**; and the rampaging Goblin God

coming from **Area D**. Any help with these problems ensures the grimlock leader's peaceful cooperation, though he is likely to betray his helpers afterwards.

Treasure

Besides *Grimstone*, which is his most prized possession, the grimlock leader has a large stash of tribute and booty, containing 517 gold pieces among three large sacks of animal hide, plus 3 thunderstones, a darkwood buckler (which he does not use) and a set of masterwork manacles.

Area D: Temple of The Goblin God

For a very long time, this area was hidden and undiscovered below the Athan fortress; the Stormcloud Company accidentally found it a while ago and is now using it as the temple for their Goblin God.

Area D is only accessible via the staircase at **B33**, which leads directly to **D1**, or the tunnel at **C2**, which leads to **D7**.

D1: Guard Post

You arrive at a short chamber, made of carved stone and lit with torches. A stairway comes down from the west; at least one door can be seen on the east side. However, four hobgoblins stand between you and the opposite exit...

These chambers are guard posts for the hobgoblin officers watching **Area D**.

Creatures (EL 3)

Four hobgoblin officers guard these areas at all times; they unrelentingly attack any intruder that comes near.

Hobgoblin Officers (4 1st Level Warriors): hp 6 each; see 'Hobgoblin' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Besides their armour and weapons (studded leather armour and longswords), each of the hobgoblins carries 2d10 gold pieces.

D2: Temple Antechamber

You reach a torch-lit corridor that runs about 50 metres from north to south. It has two doors on its west wall, mirrored by two stone arches on the east wall. The arches seem to lead to a larger chamber.

This antechamber has four accesses; two doors in the middle of its west wall lead to the tunnels coming from **D1**, while two carved stone arches lead directly into **D3**. The area is well lit by torches and by the light coming in from **D3**.

Creatures (EL 4)

Thugger, the temple guard, is always found at this area. He is a big, primitive thug, with little on his mind apart from following orders and harassing those weaker than him. Currently his orders are to make sure nobody goes inside **D3**, which allows him to do both things.

Thugger (1st Level Ogre Fighter): CR 4; Large giant; HD 4d8+16 plus 1d10+4; hp 43; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18 touch 10, flat-footed 17); Base Atk +4; Grp +16; Atk +9* melee (3d6+18*/19-20, greatsword); Full Atk +9* melee (3d6+18*/19-20, greatsword); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 26, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 8.

*Already includes modifiers from the Power Attack feat.

THE TEMPLE OF THE GOBLIN GOD AS A DUNGEON

As the goblin fortress above it, the temple is pure ancient masonry. The walls have a thickness of one foot, hardness 8 and 90 hit points per square. Breaking down one of these walls requires a successful Strength check (DC 35).

Unless otherwise stated, all doors in the temple of the Goblin God are made of reinforced wood, with a thickness of two inches, hardness 10, 40 hit points and a Break DC of 28. Those doors that are locked have an Open Lock DC of 20.

There are improvised torches in most rooms and tunnels, set at 20-foot intervals; rooms with an area

smaller than 20 feet always have at least one torch. These torches provide dim light for all of **Area D**.

A character versed in Athan culture may recognise the mark of Athan masonry via a successful Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check (DC 10).

Random Encounters in the Temple of the Goblin God

There are very few monsters stationed at the temple, so it would be unrealistic to add a random encounter table for **Area D**. Instead, assume every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area D**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering 1d4 hobgoblin officers (1st level warriors). The hobgoblins' statistics can be found in the *MM*, Chapter One.

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Skills and Feats: Intimidate +0, Listen +3, Spot +2; Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: Large greatsword, Large studded leather armour, 50 gold pieces, two silver pearls (175 gp each).

Any noise coming from **Area D2** (such as that generated by combat) attracts the attention of the gargoyles at **D3**; one of them stays at **D3** to watch the intruders while the other one flies down to warn the clerics who immediately warn the Goblin God himself.

D3: Temple of the Goblin God

You enter a great chamber with abundant illumination and ornaments on walls and floor. The stone is carved with bas-reliefs of what appear to be dragons. The north and south walls are lined with arched columns; there are two stone arches leading out to the west, two doors on the northeast corner and another two on the southeast corner. A monstrous stone altar can be seen against the east wall. Flags and banners with the Stormcloud Company seal can be seen all over the chamber.

Once, this was an ancient temple for the Athans' Dragon Lord. Rites of wyrm worship as old as time itself were practiced here, including sacrifices and black masses. Now it has been defiled, used as a shrine for the Goblin God. The Dragon Lord's holy symbol on the temple floor has been hacked and scratched away and the dragon altar on the east wall has been defaced and replaced with a small, crude stone depiction of a beastly, goblinoid deity. The many torches lit at sconces on the walls cast monstrous shadows all over the area...

Creatures (EL 4+)

Two gargoyles keep perfect, immobile watch atop the stone arches on either side of the chamber. If no combat noises have come from **D2**, both are still in the chamber, watching everything that happens below with unmoving stone eyes. If they have already been alerted, there is only one gargoyle here, while the other one has gone to warn the clerics at **D5**, though it returns in 2d6 minutes to resume its guard post.

Gargoyles (1 or 2): hp 37; see 'Gargoyle' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

D4: Altar

As you approach the dais against the temple's eastern wall, you see it has two large stone steps, above which rest what seem to be the remains of an old and crumbled stone statue, with a wooden effigy placed above them. The effigy represents a monstrous creature, like a demonic or beastly goblin. It would seem the old stone god was recently replaced with this newer, wooden one. There are strange writings etched on the stone under the effigy.

This stone altar used to be dedicated to the Dragon Lord. Now the ancient dragon statue has been defaced and crumbled, with an effigy of the Goblin God located above its remains. An Appraise check (DC 15) or Search check (DC 15) is required to ascertain the old statue had a dragon's shape when it was complete. Under the effigy, the words *Madness Betide Those Who Touch The Gods* can be read in the goblin tongue.

There is a secret compartment at the base of the altar; nobody has discovered yet, mainly because the rubble from the destroyed statue covered it completely. Finding the compartment requires a successful Search check (DC 30). Inside this compartment, there is a tear-shaped emerald, worth at least 10,000 gold pieces. This is an otherwise normal, incredibly valuable gem; however, it might have some additional, secret properties. Whatever it is, its power and secrets must be so great they must remain hidden, perhaps in some other book.

Traps (EL 4)

The Goblin God effigy is rigged to a hidden switch below it. If the effigy is touched or moved in any way, the switch activates, releasing a jet of poisonous gas within a 20-foot cone.

Goblin God Effigy Trap: CR 4; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft. cone); never miss; onset delay 2 rounds; poison (insanity mist, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, initial damage 1d4 Wis/ secondary damage 2d6 Wis); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 15. *Market Price:* 9,200 gp.

Treasure

The dragon statue was not utterly destroyed for one reason – it was hollowed and a sizeable treasure cache could fit inside it. The secret compartment inside the crumbled dragon statue is only accessible by removing the Goblin God effigy and then succeeding at a Search check (DC 15). Inside this compartment, the goblin priests hide a locked chest (Open Lock DC 25) containing 675 gold pieces. Other than the goblin priests, only their gargoyle guards know of this cache; no other creature inside the fortress or temple is aware of its existence.

D5: Goblin Priests' Rooms

You enter a well-furnished room, filled with grisly ornaments such as demonic bronze effigies, animal remains hanging from chains on the ceiling and grimly carved candelabra and torch sconces. There is a desk with a few scrolls on it and a very old and crumbling bed that has clearly been put back into service despite its age.

Azhra and Boghras, the priests of the Goblin God, live each in one of these rooms. Both rooms are identical, fitted with an old desk and bed, lit by torches on gruesomely carved

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sconces and evil-looking candelabras. There are several thin chains dangling from the ceilings, from which hang the stuffed and desiccated remains of all kinds of animals. The desks are brimming with scrolls, half of which are filled with ritualistic nonsense the goblin priests pretend they receive as a dictate from their god.

Creatures (EL 3)

Unless they have somehow been warned of the arrival of intruders, one of the goblin priests is found here, resting or scheming. He stands up immediately if faced with an intrusion. Azhra lives in the north room, Boghras in the south room.

Azhra or Boghras (3rd Level Goblin Cleric): CR 3; Small humanoid; HD 3d8+6; hp 19; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 14); Base Atk +2; Grp -3; Atk +2 melee (1d6-1, morningstar); Full Atk +2 melee (1d6-1, morningstar); SA rebuke undead; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Hide +10, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Perform (acting) +6, Ride +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Toughness.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; spell DC 12 + spell level):
0th—*detect magic, mending, read magic, resistance*;
1st—*cause fear, command, disguise self*, obscuring mist*;
2nd—*darkness, hold person, invisibility**.
*Domain spell.

Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: Holy symbol of the Goblin God, morningstar, leather armour, light wooden shield emblazoned with the Stormcloud Company seal.

Both priests react the same and have the exact same statistics. If faced with a vastly superior force, they attempt to escape using *invisibility* or *obscuring mist*; failing that, they are not above bargaining for their lives with information or treasure.

Treasure

The desk drawers usually contain sacred oils and incenses worth a rough total of 225 gold pieces, plus 3d6 smokesticks, 1d4 thunderstones and 1d3 flasks of unholy water. There is also a small alchemist's lab below the desk, used to make more smokesticks and thunderstones. Other than this, there seems to be no treasure or booty of any kind in these rooms.

D6: Secret Shrine of the Goblin God

This large, almost empty room is lit by eerily coloured candles and torches, giving it a strange, unnatural atmosphere. There is a strange, magical-looking symbol carved on the floor.

This area is off-limits for most members of the Stormcloud Company; only high-ranking officers, including Akkal Tor and the two goblin priests, are allowed to enter here and partake of the secret rituals for summoning the Goblin God. It is a 50 foot by 30 foot carved stone room, whose original purpose has been forgotten and is now being adapted as a summoning chamber for the Goblin God. There is only one visible access leading to this room, a large door on the west wall. This door is like all other doors in the temple, except it has been carved with 'arcane' warnings (actually trivial nonsense) and depictions of the Goblin God. There is also a concealed door on the south wall, which the goblins have hidden behind several layers of paint. Finding this door requires a successful Search check (DC 15); only the goblin priests know of its existence.

Several 'summoning' rituals have been held in this room, with Azhra and Boghras, the goblin priests, calling on their god amidst harmless flashes and special effects (mostly using thunderstones and smokesticks). Usually, the Goblin God pretends to be 'summoned' by entering the secret door through a cloud of smoke, so it appears like he really was summoned out of thin air. Azhra and Boghras are quite adept at performing this ritual and not even Akkal Tor has discovered the deceit.

Creatures (EL 6+)

During a summoning ritual, the room is usually occupied by Azhra and Boghras (**Area D5**), as well as all the bugbears and hobgoblin officers from **Area B** including Akkal Tor himself (**Area B35**). The Goblin God (**Area D7**) usually arrives after 2d6 minutes, though it may come in earlier if it senses there is a need for it. At any other time, the chamber is empty, unless Azhra and Boghras have been alerted of some danger, in which case they both await any intruders here, together with the Goblin God.

D7: Goblin God's Quarters

Rather than a room inside a temple, this chamber looks like an animal's den. The square stone walls and floor are littered with blood and food stains and a pile of rotting bones and refuse lies in a corner. There are a wooden table and two chairs but it seems they are hardly ever used.

This used to be the Athan fortress' treasure room, though raiding monsters and explorers emptied it long ago. It

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has proven to be still useful to hide things, though, as the Stormcloud priests use it to hide their ‘Goblin God’ when a public appearance is not necessary. The room has only one torch for illumination; the table and two chairs are of rotting, low-quality wood.

The visible exit from this chamber is a door on the north wall, leading to the secret passages behind **D6**; however, there is another exit – a secret door on the south half of the western wall. The door is a sliding stone panel, requiring a successful Search check (DC 25) to detect. So far only the Goblin God himself knows this door exists; not even his goblin priests have discovered it. The secret door leads to **Area C**, where the Goblin God has been taking prolonged leaves of absence to hunt and kill at his leisure without informing his ‘priests’.

Creatures (EL 5)

Unless he has been dealt with already, the Goblin God is usually found here. He recklessly attacks any intruder entering his area, caring little for their power of numbers; he has never met any living thing capable of hurting him so he has little fear of anything.

The Goblin God (Greater Barghest): hp 67; see ‘Barghest’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

The Goblin God has received numerous tributes and gifts from his goblin worshippers. The Goblin God stores these offerings, plus some booty he has brought from his escapades to **Area C**, in a secret 10 foot by 10 foot compartment under the floor, just below his refuse pile. Finding this compartment requires a successful Search check (DC 22). The compartment contains 603 gold pieces, 570 silver pieces and 1,209 copper pieces distributed among three coffers; in addition, it has a bag with the following gems: jet (150 gp), black pearl (200 gp) and two moonstones (75 gp each), plus an oblong darkwood box, nearly two feet long, inlaid with clove-of-gold and inscribed with runes reading ‘the Fang of Faellydow’ in Draconic. The box contains an ornate, glittering longsword made for Small creatures, on whose blade are inscribed the words ‘Faellydow Fiendfinder’ in ancient runic script. Faellydow Fiendfinder is a Small +1 longsword.

Area E: The Drowned Mines

These ancient mines were the creation of a dwarven community looking to establish an ongoing business in the ‘unclaimed’ levels inside Mount Moru. The entire mine complex was drowned when the haunted lake flooded into its tunnels and it has been abandoned ever since, after which it was overtaken by strange aquatic creatures.

The Drowned Mines may be reached from the tunnels at **C3**, which connect with the main passage at **E3**; the tunnel at **F19**, connecting with **E18**; and also from outside Mount Moru via the haunted lake, which connects with **E16**.

E1: Main Cave

You enter a large, dark cave, your steps echoing on the rock as you advance. The sounds and air currents seem to indicate many exits lead out of this cave, though it is hard to determine with certainty. There seem to be the remains of old, rusted rails traversing the floor in several directions. Nearly half the cave is covered with a shallow, filthy pool and something is causing ripples in the water...

This was the hub of the dwarven mine in its prime. Most of the mine’s traffic went through this cave, from supplies to ore to hot meals for the workers. Now it is only a black, wet reminder. There are five tunnels coming out of this chamber: one in the north wall, leading to **E3** and **Area C**; one to the east-southeast, leading to a series of natural caves, probably opened during the flood; and three along the cave’s southwest quarter, leading to the rest of the mines. The cave’s northeast quarter is completely taken over by a (roughly) 30 foot wide, 10 foot deep pond of filthy water; this pond connects via underwater passages with the flooded areas at **E8** and **E17**. There are no natural light sources in this cave.

Creatures (EL 5 or 6)

Four of the Pond Master’s fish slaves skulk around this cave, with orders to remain here and guard it from intruders. There have been very few intruders from this side during the past few years, so the fish slaves’ vigilance has grown lax; however, they react relatively quickly to any unexpected presence in their caves. As soon as an intruder appears, three of the fish slaves rush to the attack, while the fourth dives into the underwater routes leading to **E17**, to warn the Pond Master of the intrusion.

Skum (3 or 4): hp 11 each; see ‘Skum’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

E2: Unfinished Mine Tunnel

You reach what must be an unfinished dig, as the corridor comes to an abrupt halt. There are no signs of either life or death here.

These were the tunnels the dwarves had not finished when their mine flooded. A successful Search check in these areas might yield a few minute gold nuggets, with a total value of 1d4 gold pieces.

E3: Main Entrance

This is a wide, dark mine passage; its eastern half is covered with filthy water.

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THE DROWNED MINES AS A DUNGEON

Most of the drowned mines are well-made dwarven tunnels, with three-foot thick walls that have hardness 8, 540 hit points per square and a break DC of 50; except for areas **E8-E10** and **E16-E18**, which are natural, unworked caves with a thickness of five feet, hardness 8, Break DC 65 and 900 hit points per wall square. However, all the walls in the area have been weakened by the flood; for every point of damage dealt to any wall in **Area E**, there is a 1% cumulative chance the entire 10 foot by 10 foot square crumbles, causing a landslide and flood (as described in the *DMG*, Chapter Three, 'Wilderness Adventures' section). A character can become aware of this danger by a successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 15); a dwarf detects it automatically without need of a check.

There are old, ruined lamps and torches in several areas throughout the mines, though they are all unlit and useless.

Flooded Areas

Areas **E1**, **E7-E10** and **E15-E18** are all partially covered by relatively deep waters. These flooded areas count as aquatic terrain, requiring characters moving through them to make successful Swim checks (DC 10). Characters below the water are subject to drowning risks, as described in Chapter Eight of the *DMG*. These waters are exceptionally dark and murky, allowing no visibility beyond 20 feet while underwater.

Fighting underwater is quite tricky; non-aquatic creatures suffer a -2 penalty on all attack rolls while underwater, plus they become off-balance unless they succeed on a Swim check (DC 10) each round. Off-balance creatures lose any Dexterity bonuses to their

Armour Class and all attacks made against them receive a +2 bonus on the attack roll. Slashing or bludgeoning attacks made underwater do only half damage, with the exception of grappling damage, which is unaffected. Magic attacks deal normal damage, unless they are fire-based, in which case the caster must succeed at a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + spell level) or the effect automatically fails. Non-magical fire is of course ineffective underwater. Creatures inside the water have improved cover (+8 bonus to Armour Class, +4 bonus on Reflex saves) against attacks made from the surface.

Random Encounters in the Drowned Mines

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area E**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering a hostile creature, randomly determined or chosen from the table below:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREA E

D%	Encounter
01-60	1 skum
61-65	1 ooze mephit
66-80	1d4+1 skum
81-90	1d3+1 ooze mephits
91-94	1 ochre jelly
95-98	1 shambling mound
99-00	1 will-o-wisp

All of the above encounters are in addition to, and independent from, the keyed encounters on numbered areas.

The statistics for all of these monsters may be found in Chapter One of the *MM*.

This is was the main entrance tunnel of the dwarven mines, leading directly from the caves at **Area C**.

E4: Old Digging Site

This must have been the site of a large mineral vein, judging from the scattered mining tools and wagons, as well as the great number of rails leading to this point.

During the glory days of the dwarven mine, this was – literally – a gold vein. There are still lots of mining tools and devices strewn about, though most of them are useless from rust and rot. Although the flood made the mine unworkable, it actually helped release the precious minerals embedded in the area; a successful Search check (DC 15) reveals scattered gold nuggets for a total value of 5d10 gp. By actually digging into the tunnel, a single Medium character may extract an additional 1d4 gp in gold ore for every 20 points of damage he deals to the

wall; however, there is a chance the wall collapses as indicated above (**The Drowned Mines as a Dungeon**).

Creatures (EL 5)

Before the Pond Master, before the dwarves, perhaps even before the Athans and their dragon gods, these caves had two masters, two elemental entities that fought each other for control of the caves. One of these entities, known only as Ground, has always lived in this cave. Ground discreetly allowed the dwarves to build their mine for his natural affinity with their race; he considers the flood that destroyed the mines a direct affront against him and he knows it was no accident. Therefore, he has come out of his hiding place to ensure the responsible parties suffer his due vengeance.

Ground (Large Earth Elemental): hp 68; See the corresponding section under 'Elemental' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

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Ground is not necessarily hostile; to dwarves he is in fact friendly. He does not like to show himself to mortals, though his need for revenge against the ones who caused the flood may lead him to seek the help of peaceful parties. More information about the flood and the history of Ground can be found in page 29 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Ground has direct access to the great wealth hidden all over the dry parts of the mine; he is perfectly capable of producing up to 5,000 gold pieces in raw gold ore, though he is not willing to part with more than 1,000 or 2,000 of these as he wants the earth to keep part of its resources.

E7: Storage Rooms

You reach a dark, stifling room; there seems to be some containers scattered all over the ground.

These are the rooms where the dwarves temporarily stored their gold ore yields. They managed to salvage most of it, though some ore remained behind in these abandoned storage rooms. By succeeding at a Search check (DC 15), a character finds gold ore worth a rough total of 500+5d6 gp in the room.

E6: Old Digging Site

You come to an abandoned digging site, filled with trashed mining tools from picks and shovels to wagons and rails. There is a big, muddy pool at the far end of the cave. An itching, undefined sensation grows stronger as you remain in the cave.

This was a smaller gold vein in the dwarven mine; in addition to the useless tools scattered throughout the area, a successful Search check (DC 15) reveals scattered gold nuggets for a total value of 2d4 gp. By actually digging into the tunnel, a single Medium character may extract an additional 1d4 gp in gold ore for every 50 points of damage he deals to the wall; however, there is a chance the wall collapses as indicated in page 29 (**The Drowned Mines as a Dungeon** sidebar).

Creatures (EL 4)

As soon as this cave's slightest rock is moved from place, whether by digging, searching or any other disturbance, a rush of thousands of centipedes bursts forth from the wall, crumbling the stones as it passes and attacking anything on its path.

Centipede Swarm: hp 31; see 'Swarm' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

E7: The Drowned Guardian

You have to swim under the dark, filthy water to reach this area. Impossible as it may seem in this pitch-black darkness, you seem to discern something big under the surface...

Back when the mine was dry, this cave housed a large dwarven idol, representing a god of good fortune. The god's effigy, a towering stone statue about 20 feet tall, was supposed to give its blessings to the miners as they passed by it.

Creatures (EL 5)

The Huge effigy was also enchanted by dwarven magic, having the ability to move and attack its creators' enemies. However, the upheaval of elemental forces brought about by the flood has dispelled any self control the statue might have had; now it attacks anything coming near it, even now that it has been forgotten under the water.

The Drowned Guardian (Huge animated object): hp 84; see 'Animated Object' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The Guardian was built to attack enemies; currently it is out of control but not sentient enough to act outside its programming. Therefore, it attacks anything that moves, yet it does not move away from its guarding post, which comprises only **Area E7**. Clever opponents may use this circumstance to defeat or simply flee the Guardian.

E8: Slave Pit

The fish-like stench of this chamber is almost unbearable. The entire cave is almost filled by a mucky, shallow pool, below which some activity seems to be taking place.

This is one of the two slave pits maintained by the Pond Master. In these chambers, the Master breeds and keeps its half-human/half-fish slaves; this chamber in particular is where infants and young are grown and nurtured into adulthood. More than half the cave is a 10 foot deep pool; most of the breeding activity takes place underwater.

Creatures (EL 5)

There are always three fish slave overseers patrolling the pool and its banks; they immediately attack if they perceive any danger.

Fish Slave Overseers (3 skum): hp 11 each; see 'Skum' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

In addition to these overseers, there are about 10 non-combatants, among mothers and their children, below the pool's surface. They do not fight back if attacked.

Eg: Slave Pit

You arrive at a wet, muddy cave with a large pool on the right half of the floor. Several misshapen, vaguely humanoid bodies lie amidst pools of blackish ooze all around the cave.

This is one of the two slave pits kept by the Pond Master. In these chambers, the Master breeds and keeps its half-human/half-fish slaves; this chamber in particular is where the human captives are brought and forced to mate with the Pond Master's fish slaves so as to maintain the race. There is a 5 foot deep pool in the south section of the cave; the captives are kept on the dry half.

Creatures (EL 4+)

There are usually 1d2+1 fish slave guards watching the captives in the cave; if confronted by intruders, they immediately rush to attack, no questions asked.

Skum (1d2+1): hp 11 each; see 'Skum' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

There are also four human captives, kidnapped from the Haunted Lake (E16). Some of them scared out of their wits but still lucid enough to be grateful if rescued; some of them have already been driven mad by the horror of their situation. The full history and background of these captives is related in the book *Tales of Mount Moru*.

E10: Flooded Cave

This ancient, natural cave is completely flooded. There are no lights anywhere, though a low, rumbling sound keeps coming from the water.

This natural cave was never discovered or worked by the dwarven miners; it is still the dark, 60 foot deep water pool it has been for many centuries. There is gold below the lake, though anyone wishing to get to it must deal with the cave master first.

Creatures (EL 5)

This dark pool is home to one of the two elemental entities that have been fighting each other for mastery of the caves since time out of mind. It is a being of depth, cold and darkness, known only as Gorge. This entity was grossly offended by the dwarves and their mine-building in its caves, therefore, it conspired to bring about the flood that ultimately destroyed the mines. Gorge is a hateful being, full of loathing and disdain of every living thing; it will not hesitate to attack anyone that enters its pool. More information about the flood and the history of Gorge can be found in page 29 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Gorge (Large Water Elemental): hp 68; See the corresponding section under 'Elemental' in Chapter One of the *MM*, changing the creature's alignment to neutral evil.

Treasure

The bottom of Gorge's lake is a deposit for the great underground riches in the area; a successful Search check (DC 15) made near the bottom yields gold ore with a rough total value equal to 150 gold pieces per point by which the Search check exceeded 15. Regardless of the Search check result, no more than 1,800 gold pieces can be extracted from the lake.

E11: Trapped Passage

Most of these passages lead to one of the dwarves' old storage rooms; they look like normal mine passages, yet they hide clever traps to stop intruders from reaching the dwarves' loot.

Traps (EL 4)

As soon as a creature steps on one of these passages without pressing the hidden switch at the beginning of the tunnel, the trap in the passage is activated, causing a cage to fall on the hapless victim. Dwarves used these traps to catch would-be thieves; now they are not around, these cages may lead an unprepared character to a slow death inside a snare that nobody is ever coming to check.

Falling Cage Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 27); never miss; onset delay 1 round; multiple targets (up to four Medium creatures in a 10 foot by 10 foot square); locked cage (Open Lock DC 27); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 22. *Market Price:* 8,800 (12,000 for non-dwarves).

For every hour a creature or group thereof spends trapped inside the cage, there is a 10% chance of a wandering encounter (see **Random Encounter Table for Area E**, page 29). The cage has a hardness of 10 and 60 hit points.

E12: Filth Pond

The pool in this chamber is green with slime and muck; sediment of unknown, sickly organic matter can be clearly seen on the water's edges. An awful stench emanates from the mix.

This stagnant pond became infected with the passing months, with the filth growing to such a point it has become an independent living thing.

Creatures (EL 5)

In a display of unimaginably accelerated evolution, a subsentient, unicellular monster has spontaneously grown out of the organic filth and slime of this diseased pool; as a primitive organism struggling for survival, it instinctively attacks anything it perceives as edible (i.e. the party).

Ochre Jelly: 69 hp; see 'Ooze' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

E13: Old Manager's Office

This wet, musty room still features some half-drenched, rotten furniture, whose shape and function has been completely lost to time and erosion. You would not swear it, yet for a moment it seemed a couple of the mud pools moved by themselves ...

This used to be an administrative centre for the mines, where inventories and records were kept; now it is nothing but a soggy waste. With the passing years, the furniture, torches and documents have all mixed into a single, squelchy mass, impossible to tell from the muddy ground it stands on.

Creatures (EL 5)

Two impish, greedy creatures, called Gaggaloog-who-is-so-incredibly-efficient-tasks-are-afraid-of-him and Googallagawag-tough-as-rock-and-swift-as-water, dwell in this room. They have identified the area as the former accounting headquarters of the mine and set up office here, heedless of the fact that it is all but unusable now, calling themselves the 'new accountants of the drowned mines'. They are superficially aware of the conflict between the elemental forces Ground (E4) and Gorge (E10) and plan to get some profit out of it. They attempt to use anyone, even a stranger, to stir things up and balance the scales of power in their favour; their goal, of course, is to get as much of the mine's gold as possible. They are willing to share the loot with whoever helps them get it; they also know many things about the caves and their denizens they are willing to tell for the right price. Despite their businesslike attitude, they are perfectly capable of entering hostilities if provoked.

Gaggaloog-who-is-so-incredibly-efficient-tasks-are-afraid-of-him & Googallagawag-tough-as-rock-and-swift-as-water (2 ooze mephits): hp 19 each; see the corresponding section under 'Mephit' in Chapter One in the *MM*.

Treasure

The two impish accountants have already gathered a significant amount of treasure from the surrounding area, though nowhere near as valuable as they would like it to be. So far their stash includes 323 gold pieces, a chrisoberyl gem worth 90 gp, two useless, rusty miner's picks and three flasks of common lamp oil, two of which actually contain oil. They keep all this cache hidden under a mass of rotten furniture and wet organic matter; a successful Search check (DC 15) is required to find it.

E14: Condemned Barracks

You reach a dry area beyond the big, muddy pool; it is blocked by rubble, unlit and covered with slime, moss and rotting vegetable matter.

These used to be the dig's barracks, housing dwarven miners and guards; any furniture or accommodations the area might have had are now lost.

Creatures (EL 6)

Somehow, at some point, a rotting, twisted nature spirit came to inhabit the area. It is unknown whether an animating force entered the rotten plants here or the already formed creature was somehow attracted to the damp, dark area; it lives here, that is the only certainty. It seems to value peace and quiet, for it attacks any intruders relentlessly.

Shambling Mound: hp 60; see 'Shambling Mound' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

The creature goes on attacking until there are no moving creatures in sight; it has no fear, nor does it care about any damage suffered.

Treasure

The creature has gathered a number of trinkets and stuff, both from dead intruders and from scavenging the mines. It has gathered it all under the decomposing undergrowth; finding the stash requires a successful Search check (DC 15). This treasure consists of gold ore worth a rough total of 450 gold pieces, a 50 foot dwarven rope in good condition and a masterwork heavy wooden shield.

E15: The Forgotten Gallery

For some eerie, inexplicable reason, this gallery seems darker, gloomier and more sinister than the rest of the mine. Half of it is completely swamped; the mud seems to reflect some bright light, just for a second...

This lost passage used to lead to one of the dwarves' storage rooms, which became buried under tons of rock and mud during the flood. Now, the whole area is forgotten, condemned – and haunted.

Creatures (EL 6)

The gases emanating from the swamp have been affected by some unknown subterranean magic, giving birth to a malevolent, sentient spirit of light and flame. This being waits silently in the gallery darkness until a living creature comes near.

Will-O'-Wisp: hp 40; see 'Will-O-Wisp' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

This evil light spirit prefers to use its lights to confuse and harass opponents, making them believe the site is haunted and torturing them into a panic before attacking. When it fights, it does so via discreet lightning discharges, using hit-and-run tactics to remain out of its enemies' range. If it can, it tries to lead its opponents to the nearby E11 area, so it can kill them more easily as they fall in the cage trap.

THE UPPER DUNGEON

Treasure

The creature's stash is in the nearby **E11** area, positioned in such a way that creatures trying to approach it fall in the cage trap. The treasure consists mainly of gold nuggets, worth a rough total of 500 gold pieces; the remainder is useless mine debris.

E16: Haunted Lake

You reach the outskirts of what seems to be an immense lake; in fact, the lagoon seems to stretch out of the mines and even out of the mountain, as a faint light can be perceived from the far side of the water. The water is a bit less swamp-like than in other areas of the mine, though it is still quite dirty.

This underground lake connects directly with the Haunted Lake outside Mount Moru; it is possible to reach the surface by crossing the lake. There is a ghost in the lake, though the disappearances of young men and women visiting the area are not its fault, as most people seem to think. Details about the Haunted Lake, its location and its dangers can be found on page 12 of the ancient tome entitled *The Dragon Stone*; the history of the ghost and the disappearances can be found in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

E17: The Master's Pond

You reach a monstrous dark pond inside a large grotto; both the cavern's ceiling and the other side of the pond are invisible from here. The air is thick with the smell of brine and rot, though the water looks surprisingly clear and peaceful.

This 60 foot diameter, 30 foot deep bay is only a small portion of the much larger underwater realm below the caves. The water is incredibly murky, dim and filthy; however, the Pond Master uses illusion magic to make it appear nice and clean.

Creatures (EL 7)

This is the lair of the Pond Master, the ancient creature that currently rules the Drowned Mines. The Master is a 20 foot long, bloated, sentient fish, with power over the minds of others. It is always looking for humanoids to enslave and use as breeding material for its fish slaves; unluckily for the Master, there have been few humanoids in the caves since the dwarven mines were flooded, except for the few curious humans that have entered the caves via the Haunted Lake and fallen prey to the Master's fish-slaves. If suitable victims approach its cave, the Master hides below the water, expecting its targets to come closer and using its mind powers to subtly bring them to its trap.

The Pond Master (Aboleth): hp 76; See 'Aboleth' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

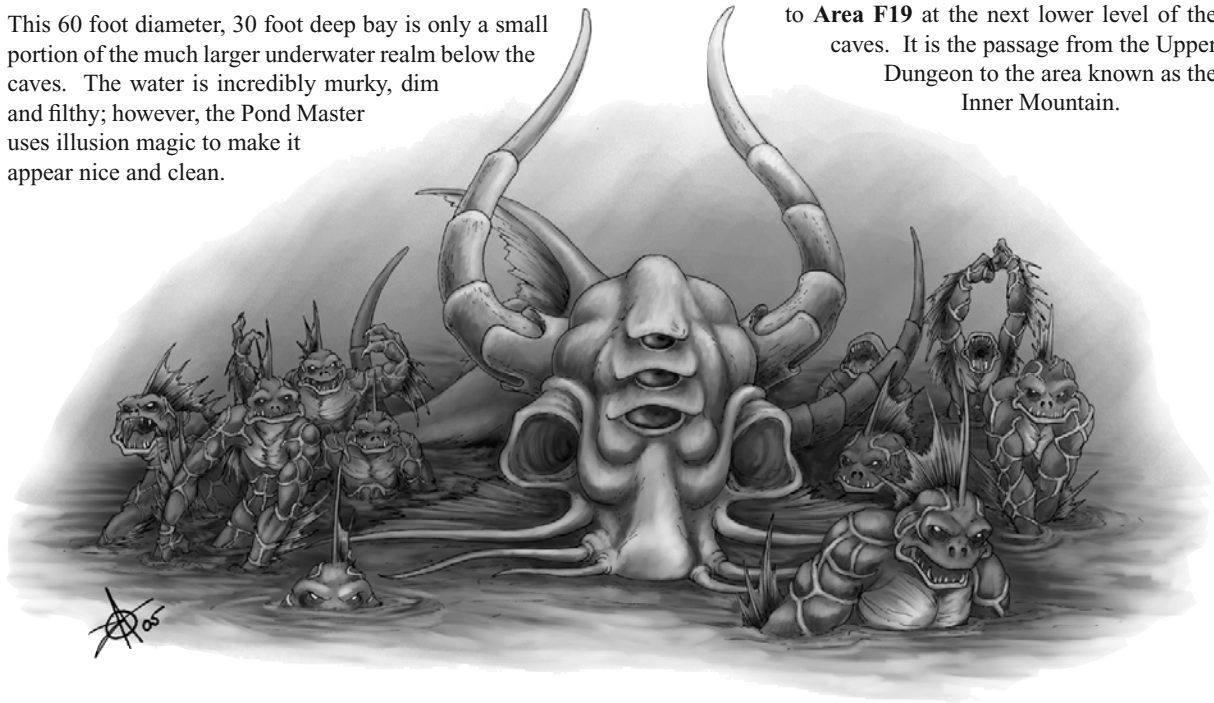
Treasure

The Pond Master stores a large cache at the bottom of its pond, made up of valuables scavenged by its fish slaves and items stolen from enslaved humanoids. This includes 366 gold pieces, 407 copper pieces, a gold diadem worth 750 gp and gold ore with a rough total value of 850 gp; it also has an *oil of magic weapon* with three applications.

E18: Exit Passage

After travelling through this slightly sloping tunnel for a while, you feel the air become much drier and warmer within a few minutes. You are clearly descending to a different area of the mountain...

This passage descends, after a one-hour walk, to **Area F19** at the next lower level of the caves. It is the passage from the Upper Dungeon to the area known as the Inner Mountain.



THE INNER MOUNTAIN

This section comprises the insides of Mount Moru, a series of inner complexes containing natural caverns as well as ancient Athan construction. The Inner Mountain is divided among the following Areas:

Area F. The Fire Pits

Old volcanic rock tunnels, connected to a molten core far below by deep pits.

Area G. The Deep Caves

A complex of dark passages at the core of the mountain, full of strange beasts.

Area H. Tomb of the Athan Kings

The other known Athan ruins inside the mountain; the old grave of a very important Athan priest-king.

Area I. The Resting Place

A dark grotto at the base of the mountain, this is the last level before the true underground areas begin.

Area F: The Fire Pits

This is a natural cave complex, linked to underground lava rivers. Numerous lava pits and cracks dot the area, making it a very dangerous adventuring site. Some of those that have explored the Fire Pits and survived refer to the place as ‘The Highland Hell’, as it seems to be an aboveground version of what the underworld must be like.

There are many routes and access leading into and out of the Fire Pits; the pit at **F15** and the tunnel at **F16** both lead down to **Area G**, though in different fashions; **F17** leads to the outside of Mount Moru after a prolonged, difficult ascension; and **F19** leads to a one-hour walk ending at the damp passages at **Area E**.

THE FIRE PITS AS A DUNGEON

The whole level is pure unworked stone, with 5 inch thick walls that have hardness 8, Break DC 65 and 900 hit points per square. There are no doors or furniture in the area.

The only light sources in **Area F** are the scattered fire pits and glowing cracks found throughout the dungeon, which give shadowy, reddish illumination to the entire area. These fire pits deal 2d6 points of fire damage per round on contact. Some of these fire pits are much more dangerous, specifically the ones located at **F3** areas.

Without reaching dangerous heat levels, this cave is significantly warmer than a common underground cave

F1: Volcanic Rock Cave

This small cave looks like a good place to rest.

Caves marked **F1** are nothing more than dead ends of volcanic rock. They offer plenty of hiding places, corners and crevices to make camp.

F2: Entrance Cave

You arrive to a large cave with a very tall ceiling; stalactites and other rock formations abound. At least five other passages seem to come out from the cave in all directions; however, there seems to be something else in here, like a moving shadow...

This cave is the largest in **Area F**, being not only wide but also quite tall. Six passages lead into and out of it; two on the west wall, two on the south wall and two on the northeast corner. A successful Search check (DC 15) or Survival check (DC 15) reveals there are also several marks of bat droppings on the ground.

Creatures (EL 4)

Two monstrous bats roost in this cave’s ceiling, hidden in wait for suitable prey. They attack by swooping down with a loud screech.

Dire Bats (2): hp 30; see ‘Dire Animals’ in the *MM*, Chapter One.

F3: Fire Pit

There are numerous fiery cracks in the floor and walls of this chamber; the largest is a great fire pit that constantly spews sparks and embers.

(around 80°F). The heat is much stronger in certain areas, as indicated below.

Random Encounters in the Fire Pits

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area F**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering a hostile creature. Choose the nearest keyed encounter/ area among **F5**, **F8** and **F10-F14**; use the creature inhabiting the chosen area as a random encounter.

The statistics for all the monsters in this table can be found in Chapter One of the *MM*.

THE INNER MOUNTAIN

Rooms labelled **F3** are very dangerous natural traps. The fire pit in one of these rooms is constantly spewing forth lava and fire, which makes it a hazard to remain in the area for long. For every hour a character remains in a room labelled **F3**, he must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15 +1 per previous check) or suffer 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Once the character falls unconscious, he begins suffering lethal damage at a rate of 1d4 points per hour.

Trap (EL 5)

The fire pit at the centre of the cave spews forth an explosive column of fire and lava every 1d4 rounds. Any creature within five feet of the pit when this happens is drenched in a lava bath for 4d6 points of fire damage, with a Reflex save allowed for half damage. A creature that fails its save suffers 2d6 points of fire damage per round for the next 1d3 rounds.

Fire Pit: CR 5; natural trap; timed trigger; automatic reset; fire spring (damage 4d6 fire plus 2d6 fire per round); Reflex save (DC 15) halves damage; multiple target (every one within a 5 foot radius); no Search check required; no Disable Device check possible; no market price.

F4: Fungal Cave

The walls, floor and ceiling of this cave are covered with some kind of reddish black moss or fungus. A patch of three strange, man-sized fungi grows in the middle of the cave. Strange lumps can be seen everywhere below the fungal blanket.

This cave is completely covered with strange fungi, almost as if some nearby creature was setting up a fungus farm. The fungus growing on the walls and floor is perfectly edible, if somewhat bland. Below the moss there are the bones and other remains of hundreds of creatures, whose organic matter serves as a feeding ground for the fungi.

Creatures (EL 6)

Three man-sized, mobile fungi live in this cave, feeding off any creature that enters their hunting grounds; they are the ones that attacked and killed the dead creatures below their fungal bed.

Violet Fungus (3): hp 15 each; see 'Fungus' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

F5: Serella's Cave

This cave looks as if someone has been trying to make it habitable; there is a curtain made of animal hide hanging from the entrance and some large stones obviously arranged as an imitation of furniture. There is a cauldron with some foul-smelling cookery inside it. A pile of bones and other remains rest in a corner.

This cave looks exactly like other caves of this level (see **F1**) but it has been rearranged so as to fit a resident. There are three rocks arranged as chairs and a table, plus a lizard skin curtain covering the entrance. Three small stones over a natural lava pit serve as the base for a cauldron, where some foul brew is being prepared. A pile of bones and refuse in a corner serves as further indication the place is inhabited.

Creatures (EL 5)

Serella, a green hag, has taken up residence in this cave. The climate does not suit her at all and the dry rock murders her skin, yet she remains in here for the possibility of becoming the chosen apprentice of Saitara Sakhija (see **Area F18**). No matter how much she may hate her new digs, Serella is quite protective of them, shooing intruders away with vehement displays of hostility.

Serella (Green Hag): hp 49; See 'Hag' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

More information about Serella's combat tactics, as well Saitara Sakhija's contest, may be found in the tome known as *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Serella's stash, hidden among the dirt and trash, includes 240 gold pieces, 672 silver pieces, three smokesticks, a masterwork greatsword that belonged to a past victim, and a holy symbol of the Dragon Lord, which the hag does not recognise.

F6: Mark of the Dragon

There seems to be something etched at the far wall of this cave.

This cave is exactly the same as most empty caves in the area, except an unknown hand left a spiral mark etched on its northwest wall. The mark appears as a primitive or simplified version of the Dragon Lord Holy Symbol; identifying it as such requires a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20).

F7: Troll Cave

You enter a cave with only a couple of lava pits and cracks; it seems unoccupied except for the bones strewn about the floor and the shadows that crouch over one of the pits...

This cave is like other caves in the Fire Pits area (see **F1**), except it has a couple of active fire pits; these are not as potent as those found on **F3** areas.

Creatures (EL 7)

Two trolls, Gerk and Groot, live in this cave; they are usually found roasting a recent kill over a lava pit. They

THE INNER MOUNTAIN



are always hungry and never afraid, so they gleefully attack any potential addition to their menu.

Gerk and Groot (2 Trolls): hp 63; see 'Troll' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Eannha the hag (see **F8**) has targeted Gerk and Groot as possible targets for a contest she and two other witches in these caves are part of. More information about this contest and its implications can be found in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Gerk and Groot keep 736 gold pieces and a violet garnet (worth 320 gp) among the fire pits of their cave.

F8: Eannha's Cave

This cave is a large lava pit, crossed by a great natural stone bridge. The entire area is strewn with clean animal bones, as if whatever killed them removed the last ounce of meat.

There is a 20 foot by 20 foot lava pit in the centre of this cave; it is easy to go around it or cross it using the stone bridge that spans its length. Crossing the pit via the bridge requires a successful Balance check (DC 10). Any one touching or falling into the pit suffers 2d6 points of fire damage per round.

Creatures (EL 6)

Eannha, a witch with coal-black skin and a blacker heart – or so local tales say – lives in this cave; she has not deigned to make the place habitable, preferring to sleep on stones, surrounded by the bones of her victims. She can usually be found near the lava pit. Eannha is another of the aspirants to becoming apprenticed to Saitara Sakhija, the mistress of the fire Pits (see **Area F18**).

Eannha (Annis): hp 45; see 'Hag' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

More information about Eannha's combat tactics, as well as Saitara Sakhija's contest, may be found in the tome known as *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Eannha hides 556 gold pieces among the bones in the northwest corner.

F9: The Digger

You approach a dead end in the caves. The site seems to feature a combination of different types of rock; from brittle to solid, from jagged to smooth, from tall boulders to scattered rubble. It gives you the impression of the refuse of a creature that eats earth...

This tunnel is similar to other empty caves in the area, except for the strange rock formations all over.

Creatures (EL 6)

A subterranean monster with supernatural burrowing abilities has made its lair in this place; most of the other inhabitants of the fire Pits are aware of its presence but let it be, as it only eats minerals. The creature roams the entire level, catching all the metal or stone the other denizens do not consume or throw to the lava. If someone approaches its lair carrying metal, it literally pops out of the rock and attacks.

Xorn, Average: hp 48; see 'Xorn' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

F10: Utha's Den

There is an unimaginably large cave bear, a fearsome, hairy mountain, chained to a wall in this cave. A food plate, also oversized, lies near the creature, filled with bones and remains. The creature starts moving as you approach...

Creatures (EL 7)

This cave houses Utha, the pet bear of Bunch Bigbelch (see **Area F11**). Utha attacks anyone that enters his cave or his master's. The great bear spends most of the time asleep, though he stirs and wakes up if a creature passing near him fails a Move Silently check (DC 16).

Utha (Dire Bear): hp 105; See ‘Dire Animals’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

F11: Bungh’s house

This cave contains a semblance of primitive furniture, with a few odd-shaped rocks located around a small lava pit, an improvised bed over a stone slab and several meat chunks hanging from leather straps on the far wall. A gigantic leather bag and two barrels rest against a corner. The whole cave is decorated with animal hides and remains, too large to have been hunted by a lone humanoid.

This room was decorated by a giant, the only living creature that has actually made an honest effort to make a comfortable home in these inhospitable caves.

Creatures (EL 7)

These are the living quarters of Bungh Bigbelch, a misanthropic giant, who opted for a life of solitude after failing to get along with each and every living thing that crossed his path – except for Utha the bear. The giant retired with his pet bear to the deepest caves he could reach; now he makes an acceptable living by murdering and robbing the other creatures in the Fire Pits, and sometimes the area outside Mount Moru. Bungh is very antisocial; he mistreats and harasses anyone entering his house and is all too glad to let things come to blows as soon as possible.

Bungh Bigbelch (Hill Giant): 102 hp; see the corresponding section under ‘Giant’, in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Eannha the hag (see **F8**) is beginning to melt Bungh’s heart, causing him to fall in love with her; this is not true love but callous manipulation, according to the rules of the grim contest organised by Saitara Sakhija at **Area F18**. More information about this contest and its implications can be found in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Other than his enormous armour and weapons, Bungh always carries 120 feet of hemp rope, weighing a total of 24 pounds. He also owns a giant’s bag, which he usually leaves in a room corner, containing the following items: 865 gold pieces, a huge chunk of cheese (equal to eight days’ worth of trail rations), five throwing rocks, a ruined breastplate turned into a cooking pot, a hollowed minotaur’s horn with beer stains, six pieces of rock crystal worth 65 gold pieces each and a crude brush made of an actual boar’s body. In addition, the two barrels against the wall contain drinking water worth roughly five weeks of trail rations, plus the smoked meat in the corner is worth another three weeks of trail rations.

F12: Asaerpe’s Cave

This is a bare volcanic rock cave, with some rubble strewn about the floor and piles of refuse in several places. Some of these look suspiciously like animal remains...

This looks rather like the other, similar caves in the area (see **F1**) except some beast seems to live here...

Creatures (EL 6)

Asaerpe, a monstrous witch with the torso of a woman and the lower body of a hunting cat, has joined the contest to become Saitara Sakhija’s new apprentice (see **Area F18**); she has settled in this cave for the contest’s duration.

Asaerpe (Lamia): hp 58; see ‘Lamia’ in the *MM*, Chapter One.

More information about Asaerpe’s combat tactics, as well as her role in Saitara Sakhija’s contest, may be found in the tome known as *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Asaerpe keeps 412 gold pieces and two gold earrings (worth 35 gp each) in a ceramic gourd on the floor of her cave.

F13: Huugu and Paaku’s Post

You see a large rock leaning against the cave walls; a stench of rotten food and offal comes from it. Under this rock there is a lava pit, around which some rubble has been gathered as if to protect the fire. Some bones and animal remains lie on a heap nearby. A creature (or is it two?) seems to be sitting against the rocks...

This is a guard post, set up by Saitara Sakhija (see **Area F18**) to watch out for any creature that enters the caves via the tunnels at **F16** or **F17**.

Creatures (EL 6)

Huugu and Paaku, two giant heads sharing a single body, have been assigned to man this guard post, with instructions to prevent the passage of any intruder. They attempt to capture any trespassers and take them to their mistress at **F18**.

Huugu and Paaku (Ettin): hp 65; see ‘Ettin’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Huugu and Paaku keep 390 gold pieces stashed in a leather bag, under the large rock at their guard post.

THE INNER MOUNTAIN

F14: The Stone of Doubt

This cave is marked by a single, five foot tall standing stone against the wall.

The Morudhain left a standing stone in this cave, seemingly to signal their passage through this area before they left it.

The standing stone has some writings etched on its surface; a character that speaks the Morudhain tongue or succeeds at a Decipher Script check (DC 20) may read the following:

*Our Brothers Are Lost
Our Brothers Go On
We Dare Not*

A successful Craft (stonework) check (DC 15), Search check (DC 20) or Survival check (DC 20) reveals the stone was carved and left here more than a year ago.

F15: The Great Chasm

This enormous, dark cave has no visible floor or ceiling; instead, the darkness continues endlessly as far as the eye can see, both above and below. The bottomless abyss below is surrounded by a rocky edge, full of fiery geysers that constantly spew fire and lava, in contrast with its bottom, which seems a dark, cold place. A natural staircase of uneven stone steps leads down the edge of the chasm.

The stone stairs along the chasm's inner wall lead down to the dark grotto at **Area G1**, below. The descent takes a little less than one hour.

F16: Descending Tunnel

You reach a sloping, wide tunnel leading down to the east. The reddish lights of the area does not seem to reach it; entering this tunnel means darkness again.

This sloping tunnel descends steadily for roughly one hour before reaching the next lower level via **Area G2**.

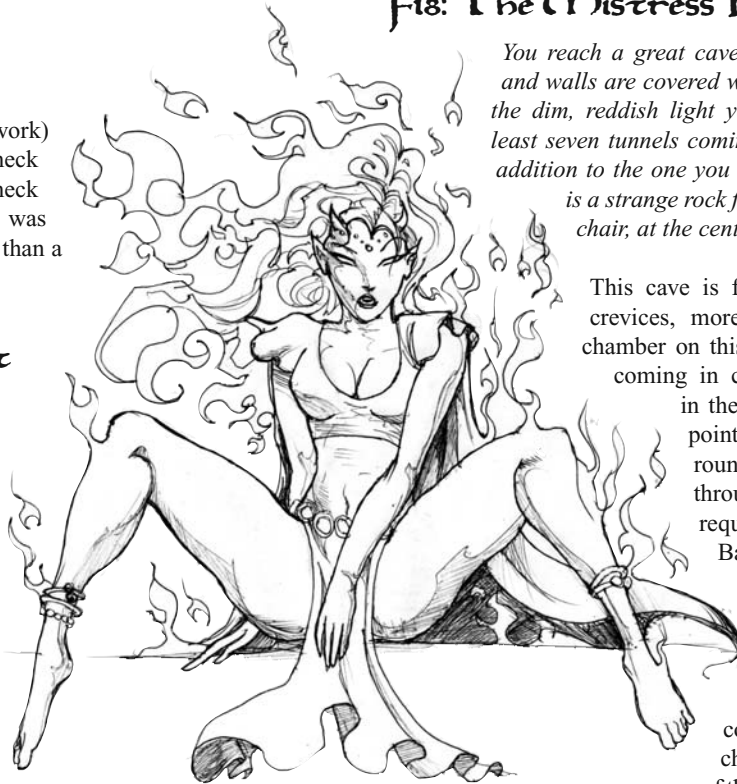
F17: Exit

This dark tunnel goes slowly upward; the air is cooler and darker than in the rest of the caves.

Using this increasingly upward path requires four hours of travelling, with a successful Climb check (DC 15) each hour. If the check fails, add one hour to the time required. After going up the path for the indicated time, it leads to a small, almost unnoticed crevice leading to the outside slopes of Mount Moru, some three hours east of Moru Road.

F18: The Mistress' hall

You reach a great cave, whose uneven floor and walls are covered with fiery lava pits. In the dim, reddish light you manage to see at least seven tunnels coming out of the cave, in addition to the one you came through. There is a strange rock formation, similar to a chair, at the centre of the chamber.



This cave is full of fiery pits and crevices, more so than any other chamber on this level; any character coming in contact with the lava in these cracks suffers 2d6 points of fire damage per round. Simply walking through this chamber requires a successful Balance check (DC 10) to avoid touching the lava and suffering the appropriate damage. There are eight tunnels coming out of this chamber, one for each of the compass directions.

Each of these eight tunnels has a length of roughly 20 feet, with a slight curve clockwise, and ends abruptly in a volcanic rock wall, except for the Northeast Passage, which leads back to the caves. There is a 15 foot tall, chair-shaped stone formation at the centre of the room; a Medium or Large creature can climb and sit on it with surprising ease.

Creatures (EL 8+)

Saitara Sakhija, the mistress of the Fire Pits, lives in this cave. She is a demoness from the elemental plane of fire, who was freed to roam the earth years ago and has now made her kingdom in these tunnels. She often uses her powers of illusion to change the appearance of her abode, so the description of her lair may be vastly different to its real appearance. A great lover of confusion, manipulation and deceit, Saitara has gathered inhuman witches from

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varied, faraway lands and talked them into entering a contest to see who is the more cunning and treacherous among them; Saitara promised a fraction of her great power of sorcery to the winner, who would be named her apprentice. In truth, the whole contest is a ruse to win Saitara's stolen heart back from the witch that stole it in the first place; the full story of Saitara, her stolen heart, her contest and the contestants can be found on page 37 of the book called *Tales of Mount Moru*.

If she learns of intruders nearing her lair, she offers them power and treasure in exchange for their servitude. Should she face hostility, she prefers to dispatch her enemies with magic rather than confronting them directly. If forced to fight, Saitara Sakhija is a formidable enemy, able – and quite willing – to bring down fearsome power upon mortals.

Saitara Sakhija (efreeti): 65 hp; see the corresponding section under 'Genie' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Saitara is tricky and manipulative in both victory and defeat; if faced with a superior force, she is prepared to offer anything, including *wishes*, in exchange for her life, though she cunningly subverts any wish to cause as much strife and mayhem as possible. If she fails to do so, she will nurture cold feelings of revenge for as long as it is needed, devising some subtle plot to make her target's lives as miserable as possible.

Treasure

Saitara likes luxury; her treasure room reflects it. This room is in the cave's northwest tunnel, hidden under a *permanent image* effect resembling a normal rock wall. Finding the room requires a successful Search check (DC 31); the illusion is not dispelled by finding the room, instead making it look as if the character found a secret door. A character touching the 'wall' is allowed a Will save (DC 18) to disbelieve the illusion.

The treasure room contains 900 gold pieces, 2,000 silver pieces and 5,570 copper pieces distributed among five chests and six silk bags; one of the chests also contains two

pieces of amber (worth 150 gp each), a deep blue spinel (worth 550 gp) and a red opal (worth 800 gp); another of the chests has a scroll case containing two *invisibility* scrolls (CL 3). There is also an exotic silken carpet (worth 680 gp) rolled against a wall, plus an ornate bronze censer (worth 600 gp) and an exotic ceramic jar containing one dose of *elixir of love*.

Fig. Mine Tunnel

This path seems much more humid and cool than the rest; it is also much darker.

After one hour of sloping ascension, this tunnel leads up to passage **E18** in the Drowned Mines.

Area G: The Deep Caves

These caves are located at the very core of Mount Moru, far away from both the surface and the deeper levels. All manner of hideous creatures are rumoured to live in them.

Area G is accessible from two descending passages in **Area F**, leading to areas **G1** and **G2** respectively. Also, the main entrance to **Area H** is located at **G16**.

G1: The Bottom

You reach a dark cavern; a series of stone stairs lead up while a passage leads out on the other side. There are some markings on the entrance wall. You can see nothing, yet you feel you are not alone...

This area is the bottom of a deep abyss leading up almost from the mountain peak. It is dark, except for the little light coming in from the adjacent **G3** area. A flight of natural stone steps along the inner wall of the abyss lead back up to **Area F15** after a one-hour climb; the only exit from here is the south passage. The markings on the entrance wall say 'Shadow Spider' in Draconic.

THE DEEP CAVES AS A DUNGEON

The deep caves are mostly uneven, unworked stone; the terrain is quite treacherous, which added to the darkness makes the place dangerous to walk in. For every five squares a party advances in the deep caves, each character must make a Reflex save (DC 10 for characters with darkvision or a ready light source, DC 20 for all other characters). If the save fails, the character has fallen in, stumbled over or ran into the irregular terrain, suffering 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

Walls are five foot thick, with hardness 8, Break DC 65 and 900 hit points per wall square. Other than a few torches located at specific areas (as detailed in the description of each area), there are no light sources in the deep caves.

Random Encounters in the Deep Caves

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area G**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance one of the creatures located at the nearest numbered cave is attracted to the source; treat as if the creature had been encountered in its lair.

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Creatures (EL 5)

Shade, an evil, old spider with the ability to travel through the shadows has settled in this cave, living off whatever it can hunt in the tunnel or the stairs. Kaedru (see **Area G17**) feeds her occasionally, though she is among the most independent of his beasts.

Shade (phase spider): hp 42; See 'Phase Spider' in the *MM*, Chapter One.

G2: The Slide

You reach a sloping entrance, scattered with rubble and small bones.

Climbing up or down this slope requires a Climb check (DC 10); if the check fails the character immediately falls, suffering 1d6 points of damage, with a Reflex save (DC 10) allowed to negate the damage. This slope connects this level with a long sloping passage connecting with **F16** after a long, steady ascent.

G3: Breeding Pit

You approach a fenced-in cave, filled with agitated fungi of various sizes, from common mould to man-sized monstrosities. Three torches illuminate the area, projecting flickering shadows on the corridor. The wooden fence has a notice with something written on it.

These walled-out pits contain monstrous fungi that serve as food for the creatures in the area. They are small caves, about 15 feet square, with a single entrance closed by wooden bars; Kaedru the Hunter (see **Area G17**) built the bars and manages the pits. Three torches illuminate the caves; these torches are the only light sources in all of **Area G**.

Each **G3** area has a single, inward-swinging wooden bar gate, improvised but well made. Having no serviceable lock, most of these gates are simply stuck to the cave entrance. The notices on the gates say 'Breeding Pit' in Draconic.

Wooden Door: 1 in. thick; hardness 5; 10 hit points; AC 5; Break DC 13.

Creatures (EL 5+)

Each cell holds from five to eight man-sized fungi in various maturing stages, which the Hunter breeds to feed his beasts. These fungi serve as both food provisions and an alarm system, as they have the ability to emit screeching sounds when they feel something approaching.

Food Fungi (shriekers): hp 11 each; see 'Fungi' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Most of the level's denizens are used to the fungi's shrieks, so it is unlikely they are attracted to the noise; however, the Hunter (**Area G17**) will surely know something is happening and come check it out.

G4: Lesser Dragon

This cave is featureless except for a few scattered rocks, bones and piles of refuse. There are some words etched on the entrance.

This is one of the Hunter's animal chambers, where he keeps and feeds his collection of monsters. The words on the entrance say 'Lesser Dragon' in Draconic.

Creatures (EL 6)

This cave in particular holds a large dragon-like monster, the Hunter's 'Lesser Dragon'. The monster attacks anything that enters its cave.

Megaraptor: hp 79; see the corresponding section under 'Dinosaur' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

G5: Twin Basilisks

This cave is darker than the others, shaded from all light by leather curtains. There is a sign written on the wall.

This is one of the Hunter's animal chambers, where he keeps and feeds his collection of monsters. The words on the entrance say 'Twin Basilisks' in Draconic. There are several bones and other remains scattered on the floor.

Creatures (EL 7)

Two basilisks are kept in this cave; the Hunter feeds them through the curtains without ever entering the chamber.

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The basilisks only allow the Hunter to give them food and will attack any living creature entering their cave.

Basilisks(2): hp 45; see Chapter One in the *MM*.

Gb: Giant Scorpion

The walls and floor of this cave are entirely filled with cracks, crevices and rock protrusions. Any creature, even a big one, could easily hide anywhere...

This is one of the Hunter's animal chambers, where he keeps and feeds his collection of monsters. The words on the entrance say 'Giant Scorpion' in Draconic.

Creatures (EL 7)

This cave is the home to a nightmarish scorpion the size of a rhino. It understands any intrusion to its cave as an invitation to hunt and eat the intruder.

Huge Monstrous Scorpion: hp 75; see the corresponding section in the *MM*, Chapter Three: Vermin.

Treasure

A successful Search check (DC 20) among the bones and other remains of the scorpion's victims reveals a large blue sapphire worth 2,000 gold pieces.

G7: Stone Bull

A low snort rumbles from somewhere inside this cave. The stone and rocks have a strange quality here, as if they were somehow more stony than normal. There seems to be a warning etched on the wall.

This is one of the Hunter's animal chambers, where he keeps and feeds his collection of monsters. The words on the entrance say 'Stone Bull – VERY DANGEROUS' in Draconic.

The floor inside this cave is a huge depression; unaware characters entering the chamber must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 10) or fall in, suffering 3d6 points of falling damage. To get out of the pit requires a successful Climb check (DC 15). There are several piles of animal remains and refuse all over the bottom of the pit, all of them turned to stone.

Creatures (EL 8)

The Hunter's 'Stone Bull' is confined to the bottom of the depression at the centre of the cave, unable to climb out. The creature tramples and cavorts all around the pit; be it for its captivity or for its naturally nasty disposition, the creature is always angry; it is more than willing to channel this anger against anything that descends to its prison.

Gorgon: hp 85; See Chapter One in the *MM*.

G8: Dangerous Cave

This cave seems older and more neglected than the others in this cave. The ground is exceptionally pebbly and uneven; no light seems to reach the other side of the cave.

Both The Hunter and his animals avoid this cave routinely. The terrain is particularly dangerous, requiring a balance check every round (DC 15) to avoid stumbling over some rock or small depression.

Traps (EL 6)

By far the greatest danger of this cave is the deep crack in its centre, a veritable natural trap for anyone attempting to enter the area. The crack is about 100 feet deep and incredibly difficult to see among the other rocks and crevices. The sloping terrain of the cave and its many loose boulders tend to cause most explorers to eventually slip and fall toward the crack. Its bottom is full of bones and other remains. Characters exploring this cave must succeed on a Spot check (DC 25) or Search check (DC 20) to notice the crack; those failing the check must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 20) or fall in. Climbing out of the crack requires, first, a successful Escape Artist check (DC 10) to get up from the narrow bottom of the crack, then, a successful Climb check (DC 10) is required to ascend the uneven walls.

Deep Crack: CR 6; natural trap; location trigger; automatic reset; Reflex save (DC 20) negates; multiple targets (all targets entering a 20' by 5' area); 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); Search DC 20; No Disable Device check possible; no market price.

G9: The King of Tigers

This cave is acceptably lit thanks to the torches on the wall. There is nothing to see, though, except for several bones and pebbles, a written sign on the wall... and a horribly, unimaginably large striped cat that slowly turns towards you, its emerald eyes eerily reflecting the torchlight.

This is one of the Hunter's animal chambers, where he keeps and feeds his collection of monsters. The words on the entrance say 'King of Tigers' in Draconic.

Creatures (EL 8)

The King of Tigers, a 13 foot long hunting cat, is one of the Hunter's favourite pieces. The beast does not attack without provocation, as the Hunter feeds it quite well; it will still not allow intruders to explore its chamber.

King of Tigers (Dire Tiger): 120 hp; see the corresponding section under 'Dire Animals' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

G10: The Great Dragon

You arrive to a great cave housing a deep, dark gorge. There is a message written on the cave entrance; from the bottom of the pit comes a rumbling sound...

This is the largest cell in the Hunter's menagerie; a 70 foot deep pit, housing the most terrible of his creatures.

Creatures (EL 8)

What the Hunter calls his 'Great Dragon', a carnivorous lizard larger than an elephant, is kept at the bottom of this pit, surrounded by strips of meat and broken bones. The monster cannot attack anything that stands outside the pit; a creature that falls or is tossed in suffers 7d6 points of falling damage and then has to deal with the monster.

Tyrannosaurus Rex: 180 hp; see the corresponding section under 'Dinosaur' in Chapter One of the MM.

G11: Haunted Cave

This cave is somewhat darker and quieter than the others. However, in the silence you think you hear a quiet, soft humming, like an ancient song that once held the meaning of a life and then became forgotten...

This is a natural, mostly unexplored cave; for some reason, the other creatures in the caves have respected it so far and it remains empty and unused.

Empty and Unused, the air seems to answer in a whisper.

Creatures (EL 9)

The ghost of the half-elven bard Fiall Garnwynn haunts these caves. As he died in his bed, thousands of miles from here, his spirit came to inhabit the place where his heart really belonged, a few paces away from the entrance to the temple of the Athan Kings. The full story of Fiall Garnwynn can be found in the book about his life and works, entitled *The Dragon Stone*.

Treasure

Garnwynn died having despaired of looking for what he could never find; his ghost still owns a scroll that collects his last secrets and discoveries. The contents of this scroll are detailed on page 50 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

G12: The Fallen Warriors

This cave is empty save for a mound of piled rocks, atop which there is a small stone tablet bearing a spiral symbol.

This cave serves as the common grave for three Morudhain warriors that fell defending their brethren from the

creatures that inhabit this area as they passed through here years ago. The fist-sized stone tablet atop their shared barrow holds what appears to be a simplified or primitive version of the Dragon Lord's Holy Symbol; a Knowledge Religion check (DC 20) is required to recognise it.

Creatures (EL 7)

The strong supernatural forces from the near Athan Tomb at **Area H** have caused one of the dead warriors to return in the form of an evil spectre, hateful of all life and willing to destroy the living humans he stalwartly protected in life.

Spectral Warrior (Spectre): hp 45; see 'Spectre' in Chapter One of the MM.

G13: Charnel Pit

The stench of rotting meat emanating from this black pit is almost unbearable. There are some stone stairs descending towards the darkness, which means that something must be below. Except for those steps, the rest of the cave seems to be purely unworked, natural stone.

After a landslide blocked the passage to this part of **Area G**, this room remained unexplored and unmolested by the creatures inhabiting other caves. A deep pit takes up the eastern half of this cave; it is accessible via a stone stairway, carved there by the Athans centuries ago. In typical Athan fashion, they used the pit to bury their dead slaves and soldiers, which were not allowed to have their own tombs.

Creatures (EL 7)

With the passing years, some carrion devouring undead took residence in the pit and remained there, engrossed with its seemingly endless supply of delicious rotting meat. They have turned the burial pit upside down, transforming it into a genuine charnel ground.

Ghosts (4): hp 29; see 'Ghoul' in Chapter One of the MM.

Treasure

The carrion-eaters have already salvaged and gathered all the valuables buried with the corpses; these valuables – 190 gold pieces and two violet garnets (worth 455 gold pieces each) – can be found in a corner, among the dead bodies.

G14: Primal Pit

You arrive at yet another pit, this one seemingly full of black ooze. The area looks rather uncared for in comparison with some of the other caves, giving it a primal, wild aspect.

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The Hunter and his beasts have all steered clear of this cave, rightly fearful of what lives in its crater. This is an otherwise normal, natural cave, *seemingly* uninhabited. Kaedru often uses the pit and the horror living in it as a trash dump.

Creatures (EL 7)

In fact, the pit in this cave houses a very dangerous entity; some form of dark, primordial ooze that can dissolve and consume a man in seconds. The creature does not leave its lair, though it remains a very real danger for anyone that so much as leans over its pit.

Black Pudding: hp 115; See the corresponding section under 'Ooze', in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The ooze attacks by reaching out with a pseudopod and attempting to capture anything that moves. It can capture and dissolve several targets at the same time.

G15: Landslide Area

This cave looks similar to the others, except there is another exit on the far side. There is something funny about that other exit, however; in fact, something makes you uneasy about the entire cave...

After several cave-ins and other accidents, this cave has become very fragile. The mere sound of someone walking through it causes pebbles to shake on the ground and fall from the ceiling; any louder noise could have catastrophic results. A successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) check (DC 10) or Survival check (DC 15) detects this danger automatically. Dwarves detect it without need of a check. An additional Knowledge (dungeoneering) check (DC 15) reveals this cave used to be a wider path, until a series of cave-ins blocked it; then another cave-in opened a new path, which is the actual south exit – no more than a violent opening on a previous, equally violent cave-in.

Natural Hazard (EL 7)

If four or more Medium creatures cross this cave simultaneously, they cause a cave-in. All characters crossing the cave take 8d6 points of bludgeoning damage, with a Reflex save (DC 15) allowed for half damage. A creature that fails its save is buried and takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage each minute; if the creature becomes unconscious, it must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) each minute or suffer 1d6 points of lethal damage until it dies. A buried character may dig free with a successful Strength check (DC 25). Characters that are not buried may dig out their friends; a free character working with his hands may free another one in a total amount of minutes equal to 2d4 minus the free character's Strength modifier (minimum of 1 minute). Halve the amount of time required if the adequate tools are used, such as picks and shovels.

Although buried characters may be dug out as described above, the passage becomes completely and irremissibly blocked, permanently cutting off the access between **G16** and the rest of **Area G**.

G16: Entrance to the Athan Tomb

You arrive at an ornate, carved stone archway, located in the middle of the rock wall, amidst an area cluttered with rubble and debris. Two crumbled pillars stand on each of its sides; ancient writings adorn the entrance. Beyond that there is only darkness.

This is the entrance to the Athan Tomb at **Area H**; the passage beyond the gate leads directly to **H1**. It is an ancient carved stone archway in the purest Athan tradition; a character versed in the Athan culture may recognise this as Athan architecture via a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 15). The arch is all decorated with bas-reliefs of both noble and monstrous creatures, including sphinxes and angels on one side, dragons and demons on the other.

The writings on the archway are in the Athan Secret Tongue, undecipherable for most modern scholars. A guide to understanding and using the Athan Secret Tongue can be found on page 53 of the tome entitled *The Dragon Stone*.

If deciphered, the words mean something to the effect of

The Dragon Sleeps and We Awake; Let Him Awake While We Sleep

G17: The Hunter

To the east, this junction evolves into a cave that seems to be used as an office, study and bedroom, all in one, smack dab in the middle of a tunnel junction, with no door or curtain separating whoever lives in it from the creatures that roam the area freely. There is a small wooden desk, a low, crude table and an odd-shaped stone in the vague form of a seat. A makeshift cot lies in a corner; a single torch hanging from the wall gives shadowy illumination to the entire area. The walls and floor display the furs and other remains of several different creatures.

This is the cave of Kaedru the Hunter, the master of this level. It has limited, practical furniture improvised from whatever resources he could find; a table carved out of a dry log, a well-suited rock used as a chair, a wooden desk taken from an ancient dungeon door, a bed made of animal furs and collected moss. The chamber is boldly located in the middle of a cave tunnel, with no doors, bars or curtains; clearly the Hunter is not afraid of the beasts he allows to roam free in the nearby caves.

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Creatures (EL 9)

Kaedru is a rugged, stealthy man, a very efficient and deadly opponent. He sees everything as a challenge to his strength, which he likes to demonstrate by stalking anything that moves, hunting anything he likes and surviving in every circumstance. Therefore, he tends to regard everyone he meets as a hazard to overcome, usually with him as the hunter and the others as prey. He will listen to others but will not be satisfied until he has challenged their strength and skill himself.

Kaedru The Hunter (Male Half-Dragon Human Ftr1/Rgr6): hp 57; More information about Kaedru, his background and his character may be found in page 111 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Besides his armour, weapons and other carried equipment, Kaedru owns various trophies and treasures obtained from his exploits; these include 1,263 gold pieces, a tourmaline (worth 110 gp) and a black pearl (worth 390 gp), plus two *greater magic weapon scrolls* (CL 5). In addition to this, he keeps two *stone to flesh scrolls*, just in case.

Area H: Tomb of the Athan Kings

These are the deepest known Athan ruins; everything else belonging to this civilisation has been lost, forgotten or

destroyed with time. The ruins consist of a tomb and temple, used long ago to bury the Athan Priest-King Aimha Bephodai. Many sages and explorers have sought these ruins, some successfully, others in vain; some of them returned home and yet more remained behind, their bones and their spirits forever attending the dead Priest-King's slumber.

Currently, **Area H** may only be reached through the Deep Caves, from the entrance located at **G16**. A second passage exists, blocked and mostly unknown; this is a great pit, passing through **H2** and leading both up to the surface and down to **Area I** at the base of the mountain.

H1: Tomb Entrance

You enter a great hall, currently in ruins but surely majestic during its glory days. The unnatural green glow of two eerie torches against the far wall gives the area a dull, disquieting light. Monstrous, faded images decorate the walls, their horror enhanced by the flickering shadows cast by the ghostly torchlight. There are four open exits, one on each of the chamber walls. The largest one is completely ruined and surrounded by debris and rubble; it leads to the natural caves outside the hall. The other three exits lead to dark stone corridors. In the centre of the chamber, the image of a coiled dragon can still be seen clearly carved on the floor; strange writings appear etched around it.

This is the entrance hall to the Tomb of the Athan Kings. It is a 50 foot by 50 foot carved stone chamber, adorned with bas-reliefs of dragons and other monsters. The chamber floor features a grandiose depiction of the Dragon Lord's Holy Symbol. There are four exits from here: the ruined gate to the north is the tomb's main entrance, leading here from **G16**; the ones to the east and west lead to an **H3** chamber and to **Area H4**, respectively. The passage to the south leads further inside the tomb.

The writings around the Dragon Lord's symbol are in the ancient Athan Secret Tongue, which is fully described and analysed in page 53 of the tome entitled *The Dragon Stone*. If deciphered, the text can be translated as

The Dragon is here in Our Hall, so we can go to His.

H2: The Great Pit

This collapsed chamber leads to what appears to be a black, bottomless pit; the pit continues as far as the eye can see both upward and downward.

This chamber has access to one of the largest and deepest chasms in Mount Moru. Downward, it is the only way to access the mountain base (**Area I**) from here, arriving at the cavern at **I1** after a two-hour descent. Upward, the chasm leads up for roughly eight hours until it reaches

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THE TOMB OF THE ATHAN KINGS AS A DUNGEON

The Tomb of the Athan Kings is an old complex of masonry tunnels, chambers and stairs. The walls here have a thickness of one foot, hardness 8, Break DC 35 and 90 hit points per square.

Unless otherwise stated, all doors in the tomb of the Athan kings are rotating stone slabs, with a thickness of four inches, hardness 8, 60 hit points and a Break DC of 28. Those doors that are locked have an Open Lock DC of 25.

There are everburning torches for areas **H1**, **H14-H16**, **H18** and **H20**; the torches illuminate these areas with an eerie green glow. Other numbered areas, as well as all corridors, are equipped with torch sconces or candelabras, though these are currently empty and useless.

Random Encounters in the Tomb of the Athan Kings

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area H**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering one of the undead spirits wandering the tomb, randomly determined or chosen from the following table:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREA H

D%	Encounter
01-40	1d3+1 shadows
41-65	1d2 spectres
66-85	1d2 ghosts (5 th level human clerics)
86-90	1 hellwasp swarm
91-95	1 mummy
96-00	1 ghost (5 th level human cleric) + 1d3 + 1 shadows

These encounters are in addition to, and independent of, keyed encounters at numbered areas. The statistics of all these monsters can be found in the corresponding

sections of the *MM*, Chapter One, except for the 5th level ghost human clerics, which are detailed here:

Ghost (5th Level Human Cleric): CR 7; Medium undead (augmented humanoid) (incorporeal); HD 5d12+3; hp 35; Init -1; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 11 (-1 Dex, +2 deflection), touch 11, flat-footed 11 or 19 (-1 Dex, +8 full plate, +2 heavy steel shield), touch 9, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +3; Grp +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6 or 1d6-1 against ethereal foes, incorporeal touch) or +3 melee (1d8-1, masterwork morningstar) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +2 melee (1d6 or 1d6-1 against ethereal foes, incorporeal touch) or +3 melee (1d8-1, masterwork morningstar) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA frightful moan, manifestation, rebuke undead 5/day, telekinesis; SQ incorporeal traits, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +8; Str 9, Dex 8, Con —, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6; Hide -1, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +10, Search +8, Spot +10; Combat Casting, Iron Will, Toughness.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1/1+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, guidance, light, mending, resistance*; 1st—*cause fear, cause fear**, *command, divine favour, doom*; 2nd—*death knell**, *enthral, hold person, silence*; 3rd—*animate dead**, *bestow curse*.
*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, melee touch attack kills single creature with 5d6 hp or less), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Full plate armour, heavy steel shield, masterwork morningstar, light crossbow, 10 bolts, silver holy symbol.

The ghost priests' special abilities are detailed under 'Ghost' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC for their frightful moan ability is 14.

the outer slopes of Mount Moru, ending in a hidden cave ten miles west from Moru Road. Both paths require a successful Climb check (DC 15) every hour; failure means one hour is added to the check.

H3: Athan Tomb

You enter a grim, lightless mausoleum, illuminated only by the faraway reflection from the main chambers' greenish light. The walls are carved, as the rest of the structure, though here the carvings look somewhat more faded and imprecise. The walls are lined with 5 feet by 1 foot long

niches, where the bones of countless humans have been piled and arranged; some of them have fallen off the niches and now litter the floor in ungraceful heaps. Four stone coffins have been arranged on the floor, their lids crumbled and misplaced after countless ages. Before time took its toll and deteriorated their features, the carvings on these coffins were life-size depictions of robed men.

These gloomy crypts are the generic burial chambers used by the Athans to bury their nobility. The corpses inside the coffins are all mummies of Athan nobles, all of them as well preserved as Athan embalming techniques have

allowed. The bones on the common niches belong to the nobles' slaves and bodyguards, buried with their masters to attend their souls on their netherworld voyage. There is a 25% chance that one of the coffins is empty, indicating the mummy that occupied it was stolen or destroyed – or maybe it simply left.

These chambers have already been ransacked by the few raiders and explorers that managed to search the area; however, a successful Search check (DC 25) might reveal a hidden piece of jewellery or two, mostly simple gold ornaments, worth a rough total of 100 gold pieces.

H4: Mummy Crypt

As you investigate this burial chamber, you cannot help but notice the coffin lids move aside...

This is mostly like other burial chambers in the area (see **H3**), except that two of its mummies are actual undead creatures.

Creatures (EL 7)

The two mummies wake up and come out of their coffins slowly, deliberately, as if deciding what to do with their ability to move. When they attack, they do so groggily and clumsily, yet unrelentingly.

Mummies (2): hp 55; see 'Mummy' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Having so far been left alone, these two mummies retain most of their treasure. Searching their coffins yields a golden crown with jade incrustations (worth 1,800 gp), two golden ankhs (worth 350 gp each) and a simple silver necklace (worth 100 gp).

H5: Shadow Crypt

The shadows in this crypt are more contrasting and agitated than normal, almost as if there was a moving light source nearby. Or maybe the shadows are moving by themselves...

This is a typical Athan burial chamber (see **H3**); however, some of the dead buried here have returned to life as undead shades of their former selves.

Creatures (EL 5)

Three shadows roam this grave; they have no qualms about leaving it should something interesting happen nearby, like the arrival of living creatures.

Shadows (2): hp 19 each; see 'Shadow' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

H6: The Sage's Grave

This chamber is in a far better state than the other tombs. The stone's texture and ornaments still appearing new and superior; even a few stains of bright paint can still be seen on the walls. It has some surviving shreds of bright red cloth hanging from the walls. Also, this chamber does not seem to house more than one corpse, lacking even the skeleton-filled niches of other crypts. There is a single coffin, made of flat, almost featureless stone at the centre of the chamber; resting upon the lid is a life-size golden statue representing an impossibly tall human warrior, sculpted as if sleeping with arms crossed over the slab. Something has been written on the coffin sides.

This burial chamber belonged to an Athan wizard, who commanded time to spare his burial ground by magical wards placed on his grave. The wizard did not wish to be buried with slaves or servants but only with his most trusted and powerful bodyguard, a magically animated statue. The central coffin contains the mummy of the Athan wizard; the statue 'sleeping' on it is the wizard's bodyguard. The last command the statue received from its master was to lie on the grave forever, rising to defend it every time someone entered. The inscription on the coffin reads *Aeathamom – Builder of Dreams* in Draconic. The coffin lid is incredibly easy to move, even with the statue sleeping on it.

Creatures (EL 8)

As soon as the coffin is touched, the statue activates and rises up, attacking the one that touched the coffin and anyone with him. It goes on attacking until destroyed or until there are no more enemies in sight.

Shield Guardian: hp 112; see Chapter One in the *MM*.

The statue still regards the wizard as its master thanks to the amulet worn by the mummy; should another creature come into possession of this amulet, the statue would regard him as its owner (see 'Shield Guardian' in Chapter One of the *MM*).

Treasure

The wizard is indeed buried with many treasures and possessions, including a gem-encrusted gold necklace (worth 900 gp), two jade earrings (worth 135 gp each), a *scroll of animate dead* (CL 5), a *wand of fox's cunning* with 50 charges and a golden amulet. This amulet allows the wearer to control the animated golden statue as indicated in the 'Shield Guardian' section in Chapter One of the *MM*. A clever, minute locking mechanism has been fitted into the amulet's chain; removing the amulet from the wizard requires a successful Open Lock check (DC 25).

H7: The Worm in the Skull

As you search this chamber, the skulls on the niches start shaking and rattling as if bothered by your presence...

This is like the other burial chambers in the area (see H3), except one of its niches holds something more than simple dead bones. In fact, one of the skeletons belonged to a feared, bloodthirsty criminal, buried here centuries ago as a punishment; now he has returned as an undead creature, full of evil and vengeance...

Creatures (EL 9)

With the passing years, the dead criminal's decaying flesh and soul were dissolved and fused into a twisted entity, a long, malicious worm-like being inside the skeleton's bones. This worm has given a semblance of life to the bones of its former body, creating a loathsome undead monster in the process. To make matters worse, the monster has the ability to animate and control the bodies of those it has slain; so far it has 'recruited' the animated corpses of five victims among the explorers that have come to the tomb throughout the years. Now, the risen dead and their master wait, hidden among the niches of this tomb, for more soldiers to join their growing army...

Mohrg: hp 91; see Chapter One in the *MM*.

Human Commoner Zombies (5): hp 16 each; see Chapter One in the *MM*.

H8: The Four Barons

As you enter the crypt, all four coffins slam open at the same time...

This crypt is similar to the others in the area (see H3), except that the four corpses inside the sarcophagi are all undead creatures.

Creatures (EL 9)

Four Athan nobles, all brothers, were buried here together. With the passing years, they rose again as undead, such was their rancour and willpower. Now, they wait for mortals to kill and add to their retinue beyond life...

Athan Barons (4 Advanced Wights): CR 5; Medium undead; HD 8d12+3; hp 55 each; Init +2; Speed 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d4+3 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+3 plus energy drain, slam); SA create spawn, energy drain; SQ darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 19.

Skills and Feats: Hide +13, Listen +15, Move Silently +21, Spot +15; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Toughness.

The Athan barons' special attacks are explained under 'Wight' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC for their

energy drain ability is 18 due to their increased Hit Dice and Charisma.

H9: Antechamber

You reach a stone antechamber, carved with monstrous images. A golden glitter shines between the crevices and bas-reliefs in the wall.

The carvings in this 30 foot by 20 foot antechamber represent Hell, where demons and monsters inflict all kinds of torments on hapless mortal victims. The glittering matter among the bas-reliefs is worthless crystal, specially prepared to look like gold dust when illuminated by torchlight. This false gold dust is intended to attract the attention of intruders, which then become easy targets for an insidious trap hidden in the walls.

Traps (EL 8)

If a creature approaches within one foot of a wall (as to see the carvings or glittering dust more closely, for example), a cruel trap is activated after a few rounds, springing dozens of one foot piercing spikes from the wall. These are particularly harmful to characters that had gotten close enough to scrutinise the carvings or fake gold dust on the crevices. The trap may be deactivated temporarily by pressing a hidden switch among the bas-reliefs; finding this switch requires a successful Search check (DC 25) and implies a risk of activating the trap.

Wall Spikes: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); onset delay 4 rounds; multiple target (as many targets as are standing within 1 ft. of the wall); Atk +20 melee (3d6, wall spikes); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30. *Market Price:* 45,600 gp.

H10: The Tomb of Tutha Oath

This burial chamber is far more sumptuous and ornate than most others you have seen here. There are decorative, monstrous carvings in every nook and cranny, most of them inlaid with precious metals and gems embedded on the very walls. There are two standing, unlit candelabras, apparently made of silver. Amidst all this luxury, there is a low stone dais with three stone steps. Atop this dais there is an open, standing sarcophagus, inside which stands another mummy, arms crossed over its chest, dressed in long robes and jewellery and carrying golden items in its hands.

This tomb holds one of the Priest-King's aides, the high priest Tutha Oath. He was buried in a separate tomb, as required by his high rank. His servants and acolytes are buried behind the walls; a Search check (DC 20) is required to discover their corpses in hidden niches below

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the masonry. The two candelabras near the entrance are still functional; if lit, they emanate light equal to that of a torch.

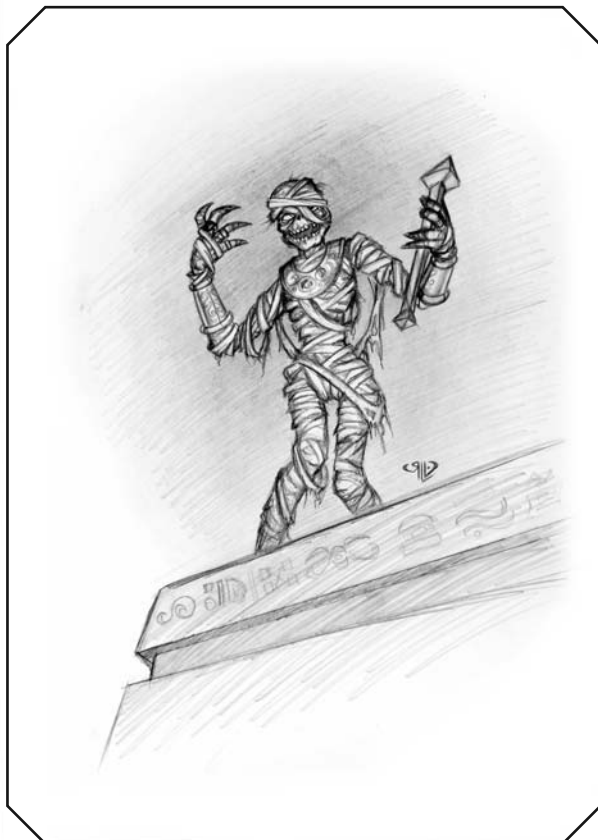
Creatures (EL 8)

Tutha Oath is not dead; he sleeps. If an intruder touches Tutha's body or possessions – be it the treasures on his body or on his tomb's walls – his dry lips immediately begin moving, as if mumbling a silent prayer; he is in fact casting *hold person*, which becomes obvious quite soon. As soon as his *hold person* spell has been resolved, Tutha Oath walks out of his coffin and attacks.

Tutha Oath (Mummy, 3rd Level Cleric): CR 8; Medium undead; HD 8d12+3 plus 3d8; hp 68; Init +4; Speed 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +6; Grp+13; Atk +13 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot, slam); Full Atk +13 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot, slam); SA despair, mummy rot, rebuke undead 5/day; SQ damage reduction 5/–, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, vulnerability to fire; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 24, Dex 10, Con –, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +3, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Spot +11; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Toughness.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; spell DC 12 + spell level): 0th—*guidance, mending, resistance* (2); 1st—*bane, cause*



*fear**, *command*, *doom*; 2nd—*death knell**, *hold person*, *silence*.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, melee touch attack kills single creature with 3d6 hp or less), Magic (may use arcane magic items as a 1st level wizard).

Possessions: Gold holy symbol of the Dragon Lord (worth 100 gp), *wand of magic missile* (CL 3).

Tutha Oath's special abilities are described under 'Mummy' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC against his despair and mummy rot abilities is 17.

Treasure

In addition to the items Tutha Oath carries with him, the chamber is inlaid with gold, gems and jewellery for a rough total value of 3,500 gp.

H1: Spectral Lords

An eerie feeling of evil and darkness floats over this crypt, like the chamber itself was offended by your presence.

This is a typical Athan burial chamber (see **H3**); two of the sarcophagi have been destroyed and the corpses within stolen. However, the souls of the remaining two corpses still haunt the place, in the form of evil undead shades.

Creatures (EL 9)

The evil shades of two Athan nobles still inhabit this area; they mercilessly attack any living being that enters the crypt.

Spectres (2): hp 45; see 'Spectre' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

H12: The Ghost and The Door

As you reach the passage junction, torchlights flicker, the temperature seems to drop and the air itself seems agitated...

This spot in the otherwise featureless corridor is remarkable for two reasons: first, it is haunted by the ghost of Andwar Bacchi, the sage who died searching for the Athan Priest-King in the depths of Mount Moru. Second, it leads to the Priest-King's tomb: ironically, Andwar Bacchi's obsession automatically led his undead soul to the very place he never found in life; the secret door leading to **Area H14**. The door is hidden in the south wall of this corridor, directly behind the place where Bacchi usually manifests. Finding the secret door requires a successful Search check (DC 27).

Creatures (EL 9)

The ghost of Andwar Bacchi wanders the area endlessly, lamenting his failure and wondering where are the secrets he sought. He has been driven mad by undeath, attacking living beings randomly and unexpectedly; in his rare moments of lucidity, he is a valuable source of information about the Athan civilisation in general and this area in particular. The full history of Andwar Bacchi and his failed quest can be found in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 45.

H13: The Tomb of Tutha Saeth

This must have been an ornate, luxurious tomb in the past; now it is utterly crumbled and devastated, its walls collapsed, its carvings faded and its floor transformed into a ravaged ruin, opening into a deep chasm like a rotten tooth. From beneath the chasm, some horrid sound seems to rise...

This was the tomb of Tutha Saeth, the second aide of the Priest-King, until unknown circumstances utterly devastated it, leaving nothing but – quite literally – a hole on the ground. This cavity leads some 50 feet below before narrowing to tiny cracks, impassable to a normal humanoid; any creature falling in suffers 5d6 points of falling damage.

Creatures (EL 8)

The cracks at the bottom of the pit lead much farther below than it would seem, and *something* has been able to fit through and come up. Any creature that falls in the pit or examines it closely for more than one round attracts the attention of its current inhabitants: a swarm of horrid, demonic insects, probably originating from hell itself.

Hellwasp Swarm: hp 93; see the corresponding section under ‘Swarm’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The swarm immediately attempts to enter and possess any body nearby, whether living or dead; if it fails, it attacks normally by swarming over anything that moves.

H14: Tomb Hall

You enter an incredibly ancient chamber, with so much dust gathered it comes up in wisps and clouds as you walk in. The chamber is palely illuminated by the supernatural light of two candelabra, alight with green fire through impossibly long centuries. The entrance opens into a dais with two stone steps, leading to the main chamber level. The far side of the chamber features three stone doors, one on each of the left and right walls and another at the centre. This central door stands atop another dais. In the middle of the chamber, there is a great bas-relief of a coiled dragon, carved in what appears to be solid

gemstone, though that would be impossible since the image is roughly ten feet in diameter. The whole chamber has an eerie, unnatural aura, like it is part of a dream...

This is the antechamber to the Tomb of the Athan Priest-King. It is lit by two everburning torches atop silver candelabras; its walls are decorated with glorious, impressive, disquieting draconic shapes.

The chamber’s stone doors are carved with a life-size likeness of a human male, dressed in luxurious clothes. The carving is represented holding out an open palm in front of him. The doors have no locks and thus no means of opening; when attempting to break them down, treat these doors as part of the wall (Break DC 35). A character may only open these doors by touching the carved human’s open hand with his own hand; however, the character’s hand must have suffered electrical damage within the last 24 hours or be currently channelling electrical energy; otherwise, touching the figure’s hand is also useless. Casting *shocking grasp*, or any other electrical-based spell requiring the caster’s hands to channel electrical energy, counts as channelling electrical energy for the purposes of opening the door. All the doors have an inscription, reading *Come Through The Storm* in Draconic.

Creatures (EL 7)

The coiling dragon carved on the chamber floor is actually a magical construct, programmed to destroy anyone entering the chamber; as soon as a living creature steps down from the dais at the north entrance, the gemstone begins to glow and the dragon construct pries itself out of its place on the floor, taking the form of a real dragon and moving in to attack the intruders.

Carved Gemstone Dragon (Gargantuan animated object): CR 7; Gargantuan construct; HD 16d10+60; hp 148; Init -2; Speed 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 4, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +12; Grp +31; Atk +15 melee (2d8+10, slam); Full Atk +15 melee (2d8+10, slam); Space/Reach 20 ft./15 ft.; SQ construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., hardness 8, low-light vision; AL —; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 24, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: —

H15: Tomb of the Priest-King

This is a dark, old, musty tomb; it seems like it has not been opened in many centuries. However, two green torches still burn as if they had been lit a few hours ago, giving an uncanny glow to the entire room. Contrary to the other, more ornate tombs, this chamber is quite bare, except for a black throne against the far wall, directly opposite the entrance. A mummy dressed in black robes sits there, a curved sword in its lap, its open palm holding some kind of dull gem. The corpse seems to look intently at the stone.

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This bare chamber is the last resting place of Aimha Bephodai, the last Athan Priest-King. He ordered his chamber to have no ornaments, no treasure and no slaves; the only treasure in the room is the gem he has been examining and mulling over, immobile on his chair, for the past centuries.

Creatures (EL 10)

The Priest-King is fully undead, of course; if he does not move, it is simply because he is too engrossed in his gem to pay any attention to intruders. If approached, he begins talking about the gem, its possible meaning and the purpose of the entire tomb. More information about the Priest-King, his history and his tomb can be found in page 51 of the ancient tome entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Aimha Bephodai, the Last Athan Priest-King: hp 78; see *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Although the Priest-King prefers to talk than to fight, he still counterattacks ferociously if provoked. If the undead body of the priest king is destroyed here, its immortal soul comes to inhabit the great statue at **H28**.

Aimha's weapons and armour are described in the corresponding section in *Tales of Mount Moru*. The gem he so fixatedly holds is a tear-shaped drop of plain brass; despite its apparent worthlessness, the gem actually has a value of 10,000 gold pieces. Other than that, it seems to have no special properties, magical or otherwise, though it is surely not an ordinary drop of brass. Perhaps other sources might contain some more information about this item and what it really is...

H1b: Three Dragons Dais

You stand before a stone dais, roughly one foot above ground level. There are three identical coiling dragons carved on the dais, each of them about ten inches in diameter. All three dragons appear to be carved out of some form of gemstone; one of the dragons seems made of amber, the second looks like it is made of ruby and the third one appears carved from diamond.

There are three such platforms in **Area H**, all of them facing a door carved with a regal man extending an open palm. One of these doors is the one before the dais at **Area H14**; the other two work exactly like that one, requiring to be touched by a hand that is currently channelling electricity or has channelled it in the past 24 hours. The dragons are not made of real gemstone and have no intrinsic gold piece value, except as components of a magical trap (see below).

Traps (EL 8)

These daises and the gemstone dragons carved on them are actually deadly magical traps. If a creature comes in

contact with any one of the dragons for more than one round, it suffers energy damage according to the dragon touched. The amber dragon deals electrical damage, the ruby dragon deals fire damage and the diamond dragon deals cold damage. Of course, any creature that suffers damage from any of the three dragons counts as having suffered damage from the appropriate energy type for the purposes of opening the doors requiring a character to do so (see **H14** and **H18**).

Three Dragons Trap: CR 8; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; onset delay (2 rounds); never miss; multiple target (maximum of three targets, one target per dragon); energy discharge (9d6 fire, 9d6 cold or 9d6 electrical); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30. *Cost:* 58,500 gp, 4,680 XP.

H1c: Golem Guard

This tunnel ends abruptly in a blind alley. A large terracotta statue, representing a muscular, naked demon with obscenely exaggerated features, leans against the far wall.

This was the secret access to the tomb stables, where infernal mounts for the dead Athan lords were buried. The dead end wall is actually a secret door (sliding stone panel); finding and opening it requires a successful Search check (DC 20).



Creatures (EL 10)

The demon statue against the wall is animated; as soon as a living creature attempts to touch the wall or the statue, it moves and attacks in a murderous frenzy that does not stop until there are no living creatures in sight.

Clay Golem: hp 90; see the corresponding section under 'Golem' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

H18: Secret Temple

This great chamber is far darker and more sinister than the rest of the crypt, even despite the greenish light coming from the chandeliers on its four corners. To begin with, the chamber is entirely made of polished, black stone, as opposed to the carved rock from the upper storey. There are two rows of arched columns in front of the left and right walls; beyond these doors there are four stone doors, two on each wall. There are also two large, double doors on the far wall, flanking what seems to be a black stone altar. Then you glance at the floor of the chamber and see the glowing pit in its centre, apparently full of flickering blue flames.

This was the dark temple hidden beneath the tomb of the Athan kings, where the Athan priests and sages practised their dark fiend-worshipping rituals. Few Athans even knew of the existence of this temple and others like it, including the immense majority of the warriors, slaves and even kings whose bones rest in the chambers above. This chamber is the main temple, with an altar to the dragon lord on the far wall and a dark fire pit fuelled by evil magic. Many exits lead out of this temple; two black silk curtains lead back to the north tunnels and the tomb proper, while two sets of double doors lead to an **H29** chamber and to **Area H25**, respectively. There are four smaller doors, two on the west wall and two on the east; these lead to the forbidden arcane cells where the Athan cultists summoned and trapped denizens of the lower planes.

All the doors in this chamber are carved to represent a life-size noble man with an open palm extended outward, like those at **H14**. As soon as a character touches any of this chamber's doors, the trap at **H20** is activated against him.

The four doors on the east and west walls work exactly like those in **H14**, except that the hand touching the carved figure's hand must have channelled or received fire damage instead of electrical damage. Thus, to open one of these four doors, a character must touch the carved human's open hand with a hand that has suffered or channelled fire damage within the last 24 hours. Casting *burning hands*, *fire seeds* or any fire-based spell requiring the caster's hands to handle fire counts as channelling fire damage for the purposes of opening the door. The four doors have an inscription, reading *The Burning Shall Pass* in Draconic. The doors leading to **H29** and **H25** work the same; only they require cold damage, as detailed in

the description for **H29**. Their inscriptions read *Only the Cold; Only the Dead* in Draconic.

Traps (EL 9)

The fire pit at the centre of the chamber is a deadly magical trap; it activates as soon as any creature attempts to open the coiling dragon lock at **H20**. When activated, the magical pit trap rains blue fire on the entire chamber. This fire is rigged not to damage the chamber's walls, floor, ceiling, doors or curtains; it only harms living creatures by burning all their moisture dry (as a *horrid wilting* spell). Since it is not real fire damage, this trap has normal effects on creatures with any kind of immunity, resistance or vulnerability to fire.

Blue Fire Trap: CR 9; magic device; touch trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; special bypass (see **H20**); spell effect (*horrid wilting*, 16th level wizard, 16d6, Fortitude DC 22 halves damage); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33. *Cost:* 72,000 gp, 5,760 XP.

H19: Stables

Two oblong, narrow chambers adjacent to each other open to the left of this passage. As the passage itself, they are made of polished black stone. There are some words carved on the corridor wall, between the two chambers. The floor of each chamber features a pit, containing some crushed bones, a set of chains hanging from the wall and some strange symbols written on the floor...

These chambers were hellish stables, where the Athans kept the fiendish mounts created or summoned by their dark sorcery. The bones in the pits are the remains of the food offerings made to the hellish mounts; the chains were used to bind them once they had accepted the food. The arcane symbols carved on the ground are magical wards intended to hold the creatures once they were summoned. The message shown amidst the two chambers reads *Feed The Fiends* in Draconic.

Creatures (EL 7)

If any 5th level or higher summoning spell is cast in either of these chambers, or any meat (and not any other kind of food) is placed on either pit, the wards on the floor begin glowing, the chains rattle and shake and a creature begins taking form in the chamber. It is Dracheron, the mount of the Priest-King (see **H15**). The beast allowed itself to be ridden by the Priest-King only by direct orders of the Dragon Lord; now its former master has died, it is not willing to serve anybody. If anyone attempts to tame, touch or attack Dracheron now, it attacks furiously.

Dracheron, Dark Steed of the Priest-King (Half-Dragon Nightmare): CR 7; Large dragon (augmented outsider); HD 6d10+24; hp 57; Init +6; Spd 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); AC 28, touch 11, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +6; Grp +18; Atk +13 melee (1d6+8 plus 1d4 fire, claw);

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Full Atk +13 melee (1d6+8 plus 1d4 fire, 2 claws) and +8 melee (1d8+4, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./ 10 ft.; SA breath weapon, flaming hooves, smoke; SQ astral projection, darkvision 60 ft., etherealness, immunity to fire, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 26, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +9, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +9, Spot +11, Survival +3 (+5 on other planes and following tracks); Alertness, Improved Initiative, Run.

Breath weapon (Su): 30-foot cone of fire, damage 6d8, Reflex half DC 17.

Dracheron's remaining special abilities are detailed under 'Nightmare' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC against its smoke ability is 17.

H20: Dark Altar

You face an altar of black stone, picturing a rampant dragon mounted atop a 5 foot high column. The dragon's long neck curves downward, so the head is lower than the body; the dragon's jaws are wide open. There is a coiling dragon carved on the column, with some writings below it.

This is the Dragon Lord effigy the ancient Athan priests bowed and prayed to. A successful Search check (DC 25) reveals the coiling dragon in the column is actually a combination lock allowing the altar to open. Once this is discovered, actually opening the coiling dragon lock requires a successful Open Lock check (DC 27). However, any tampering with the coiling dragon activates the trap at **H18**.

Traps (EL 8)

The dragon is a trap on itself; the head automatically spits a line of acid against anyone that touches any of the doors on the chamber. If two or more doors are touched simultaneously, the dragon spits against whoever is touching the closest door. Twisting the dragon's head in a certain way bypasses the trap; finding this hidden switch requires a successful Search DC (DC 25).

Acid Spit Trap: CR 8; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (DC 25); Atk +19 ranged touch; alchemical item (acid, 8d6 damage); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25. *Market Price:* 37,600 gp.

Treasure

If the secret compartment inside the altar is successfully opened, it reveals all the treasure gathered by the Athan priests while the temple functioned: 3,162 gold pieces,

3 freshwater pearls (15 gp each), 3 rock crystals (50 gp each), 2 jaspers (35 gp each), 3 white pearls (115 gp each), 1 deep blue spinel (560 gp) and 1 emerald (1,200 gp), plus 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, 1 scroll with 2 *dispel magic* spells (divine CL 5), 1 scroll with 2 *searing light* spells (divine CL 5) and a suit of dragonhide plate armour.

H21: Sleeping Beauties

This is a narrow, deep chamber, with a single stone slab against the far wall. Two incredibly beautiful women, dressed in white robes and rich jewellery, lie inert on the slab. Even if they are mummified corpses, they are unbelievably beautiful, as goddesses under a curse. There is something written on the slab...

This is one of the rooms the Athans used to bind evil outsiders and hold them captive. All of the fiends in these rooms are bound to remain here for many centuries due to an ancient magic pact made with the Athan high priests.

The stone slab in this room reads *Two Kisses for Two Lives* in Draconic. A successful Appraise check (DC 25) recognises the inscription was not made by a native speaker, perhaps not even by a mortal, as it is scratched with a claw.

Creatures (EL 9)

This room houses two lusty demonesses, which assume human guise and feign a 'sleeping death' to trick some charming prince-aspirant into kissing them. They and the priests used each other frequently to satisfy their respective lusts. As their kisses slowly drain the target's life, the demonesses do not attack, preferring to use their magic and charms to trick their victims into making love to death. If faced with more than two targets, they attempt to share victims evenly, making a veritable orgy of the encounter.

Succubi (2): hp 33 each; see the corresponding section under 'Demon' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The spell that binds the succubi to this chamber prevents them from using their *ethereal jaunt*, *greater teleport* or *summon demon* abilities.

Treasure

The succubi have some valuables hidden under the slab (Search DC 20), belonging to their victims since they were bound to the tomb. They keep this treasure as a 'retirement fund' for when their deal with the Athan high priests expires; it includes 1,267 gold pieces and a *rod of wonder*. In addition, each of the succubi wears a golden bracelet (150 gp), emerald-encrusted tiara (2,000 gp) and silver necklace (350 gp).

H22: The Dead Devil

This dark narrow room has a single open sarcophagus; a skeleton lies there with its arms crossed. As you look at it, a coat of thin ice begins to spread over the walls...

This is one of the rooms the Athans used to bind evil outsiders and hold them captive. All of the fiends in these rooms are bound to remain here for many centuries due to an ancient magic pact made with the Athan high priests.

Creatures (EL 9)

The coffin in this room houses not a true undead creature but a skeletal fiend, brought as a guardian many centuries ago and forgotten here ever since the Athan priesthood fell. The creature has been dominated by boredom and resentment ever since and attacks anything that moves for the sheer hateful relief of causing pain. As soon as any potential victims enter its room, it creates a *wall of ice* to cut their escape off.

Bone Devil: hp 95; see the corresponding section under 'Devil' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The spell that binds the bone devil to this chamber prevents it from using its *greater teleport* or *summon devil* abilities; in retaliation, it gleefully casts *dimensional anchor* on anything it meets so they 'know how it feels'.

Treasure

The demon's coffin contains some trophies from past victims, including 500 gold pieces, a gem-encrusted golden circlet worth 4,000 gp, an *oil of bless weapon* and a *necklace of fireballs* (type I).

H23: The Vulture-Thing

This narrow stone chamber is empty save for an arcane circle carved on the floor; inside the circle sitting, with legs crossed, is a strange and creepy creature, resembling a cross between a large humanoid and a vulture. It appears to sleep; then it slowly lifts its spindly neck until its fixed gaze meets yours...

This is one of the rooms the Athans used to bind evil outsiders and hold them captive. All of the fiends in these rooms are bound to remain here for many centuries due to an ancient magic pact made with the Athan high priests.

Creatures (EL 9)

This creature is a vulture-like demon from the lower planes; centuries of solitude and introspection have twisted its demonic blood thirst and given it a reflexive, sadistic bent. The creature does not attack intruders unless provoked; however, it invites any character that enters the chamber to listen to a story. If the characters accept, the demon bids them to sit in front of it around the circle; then it slowly, creakingly begins to tell some improvised,

distracting story as it imperceptibly begins a supernatural attack (see below).

Vrock: hp 115; see the corresponding entry under 'Demon' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

As soon as the last character sits to listen to its story, the demon releases a cloud of deadly spores from its body. This is a spore attack as described in the Vrock description under 'Demon' in Chapter One of the *MM*. As its victims begin to suffer damage and sprout hellish vines, the demon laughs and mocks them yet it continues its made-up story. If it is attacked before ten rounds have passed, it retaliates and combat ensues normally. However, if the targets listen patiently to the story through the damage and pain, the demon applauds their patience and resilience and gives them permission to leave unharmed, plus a single free pick from its treasure.

The spell that binds the vulture-demon to this chamber prevents it from using its *greater teleport* ability.

Treasure

The vulture-thing keeps the following items in an unceremonious pile behind it: an ivory hunting horn bejewelled with jade (worth 850 gp), a mirror with a frame of pure gold (480 gp), a cold iron scimitar with a carved gold pommel (1500 gp), a *+1 heavy wooden shield* carved with a rampant vulture and an *elixir of fire breath* labelled 'dragon potion'.

H24: The Gaze of Death

This narrow chamber has a simple black carpet, two bookcases and a chair of black wood. There is a fireplace on the far wall, though it does not seem to have a chimney or emit any smoke.

Just like areas H21-H23, this room is occupied by a fiend; however, this one did not originate on the lower planes but is instead the tormented soul of an Athan sage that was transformed into a demon by unnameable curses. The room, illuminated by the unnatural fireplace's pale light, contains a square (5 foot by 5 foot) black rug, fully made of human scalps, plus a darkwood chair and two bookcases containing what appear to be incredibly dusty and old books and scrolls, all worm-eaten and full of cobwebs. These books and scrolls are completely useless and crumble to dust if someone attempts to remove them.

Creatures (EL 8)

One minute after intruders enter the chamber, the owner of the cave slowly appears out of the flames in the fireplace; first only a floating head seems to appear, then its full body comes into view. This used to be an Athan sage, who journeyed in life to the lower planes of chaos and never returned. Instead, the sage's undead soul became attuned to those planes of ultimate evil and then was summoned

back to what had been his home. Now, the former sage haunts these halls as an undead demon, with no features on its smooth-skinned, grey body except for a vague skull-like countenance on what had been its face. First, the evil creature looks at the intruders with all the supernatural power of its gaze attack; then it comes out of the fireplace to attack.

Bodak: hp 58; see 'Bodak' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

H25: Twisted Tomb

The stone coffin in this tomb has been turned upside down, its lid smashed and scattered. A strange contraption rests on the upturned stone coffin, vibrating and pulsating as if it was a living thing. There is a horrid creature connected to this machine, its humanoid body apparently built from the pieces of several mummified human corpses. What seem to be hacked, embalmed human limbs and remains litter the stone floor around the monsters.

This is the chamber where the missing corpses from **H29** areas have been taken. It used to be one of the Four Dark Tombs (see **H29**) until a renegade, insane Athan sage secretly stole the mummies in the other three tombs and brought them here to perform strange experiments on them. There, he took the best-preserved parts of each mummy and used them to build a human-like construct – a construct made of mummified flesh.

The double doors to this chamber are magically locked stone doors, carved with the effigy of a regal man standing with his palm extended in front; they work exactly as the doors described in **H29** areas. As soon as the doors to this chamber are opened successfully, a hidden mechanism activates the artefact on the overturned coffin.

The Artefact

The machine atop the overturned coffin, built by an anonymous Athan sage, is an alchemical device feeding electrical energy to the construct body. Once the door to the chamber has been opened, an ancient trigger activates the artefact, waking the construct in four rounds. Unless the artefact is deactivated, the construct comes alive and attacks after this time. Deactivating the artefact takes a full-round action and requires a Craft (engineering) check (DC 25) or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 25). Once the construct wakes up, it remains unaffected by whatever happens to the artefact and must be dealt with separately. The contraption itself is quite old and has been stretched to the very limits of its working life; it becomes permanently useless as soon as it is deactivated or the creature awakes.

Creatures (EL 10)

If awakened, the construct enters a murdering rampage, attacking anything that moves.

Mummy Golem: hp 101; this monster is described in page 60 of the book entitled *The Dragon Stone*.

H26: Death's Door

This is a stone door, full of strange runes and inscriptions. It has no visible lock or handle. Carved on the door is a life-size likeness of a regal man, standing with one palm extended outward

This is a trapped door, put here to guard the entrance to the deepest level of the Athan temple. It may only be opened by touching the hand of the man carved on it; however, only the hand of a dead man opens the door. If the carved hand is touched by a living creature, it not only fails to open the door but also activates a deadly trap (see below). The door has a clearly visible inscription, reading *The Dead Pass Through; the Living Pass Away*.

Traps (CR 10)

Any living creature that touches the hand of the man carved on the door suffers the effect of an *energy drain* spell without opening the door; touching the hand with a dead man's limb opens the door without activating the trap.

Carved Hand Trap: CR 10; magic device; touch trigger (attached); automatic reset; spell effect (*energy drain*, 17th level wizard, one DC 23 Fortitude save per negative level removes the negative level after 24 hours); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34. *Cost:* 76,500 gp, 6,120 XP.

H27: Fiery Well

There is a wide, round fire pit at the centre of this chamber. The shadows cast by the flickering flames stresses the contours of the horrid, obscene carvings on the wall.

This chamber was banned to all but the most fanatic and highest-ranking sages living in the Temple; it served as an antechamber to the Demonic Altar at **H28**. The carvings on the wall do not represent monsters of dragons but scenes of countless kinds of unbearable torture at the hands of the most horrible demons imaginable. The hellish pit is the only light source in the chamber.

Creatures (EL 9)

A dark elemental spirit, made of pure hellfire, lives in the fiery pit, charged with stopping any intruders from advancing further. It allows free passage to anyone offering him a sacrifice equal to 9 Hit Dice worth of living creatures or 9,000 gp worth of items to feed its flames. If it does not receive such an offering, it attacks.

Greater Fire Elemental: hp 178; see the corresponding section under 'Elemental' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

H28: The Priest-King

The walls of this great octagonal chamber are covered with a mind-numbing arrangement of what appear to be carved words, thousands upon thousands of them lining every brick, column and tile. In the middle of the chamber, standing amidst a circle of arcane symbols, is an enormous stone statue, depicting a gigantic man in regal clothes. The statue's face looks both pensive and tense.

This is the Athans' darkest altar, where their priest caste gave secret worship not to the Dragon Lord but to a deified, demonic version of their own Priest-King. The carvings lining the walls tell an arcane, mystifying tale of symbols and secrets, detailed in page 10 of the book called *The Dragon Stone*.

The great stone statue resembles a 20 foot tall man, dressed in rich and luxurious attire. The one foot high pedestal it rests upon has the legend *Aimha Bephodai, the last Athan Priest-King, Master of the Dragon* written in both Abyssal and Draconic.

Creatures (EL 11)

If the undead body of Aimha Bephodai at **H15** has already been destroyed, the dead king's immortal soul inhabits the statue now, giving it a hellish semblance of life. As soon as it senses intruders, it flexes its stone joints and ambles off the pedestal, howling clumsy words in the ancient Athan tongue that may be translated (via a *comprehend languages* spell or similar means) into something vaguely like 'No more wondering now! Now I am It! Now I am The Stone!!'

Stone Golem: hp 107; see the corresponding section under 'Golem' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The golem's immense forehead has a single encrustation; a minuscule, tear-shaped drop of pure copper. Discovering a way to pry the copper drop from the statue requires a successful Search check (DC 20) or Spot check (DC 25); prying it open requires a successful Craft (stonework) check (DC 18). The copper drop is incredibly valuable (10,000 gold pieces), though it radiates no magic; however, it is surely not an ordinary drop of copper. Perhaps other books might contain some more information about the nature and origin of the copper teardrop...

Treasure

There is a secret compartment below the statue's stone pedestal; finding this compartment requires a successful Search check (DC 30). Inside the compartment there is a stone coffin, almost seven feet long. Inside this coffin there is a scythe with a handle of lacquered wood, adorned with cloth-of-gold symbols and pictures, and a blade that seems to be made of both iron and silver. The weapon's handle has some arcane writings on it; a successful *read magic* spell indicates they read *The Reaper*. This weapon was created long ago by unknown Athan weaponsmiths,

with the specific purpose of fighting undead, and used throughout the ages. *The reaper* is a +1 scythe that combines the abilities of an *undead bane* and a *flaming burst* weapon.

H29: The Four Dark Tombs

This room looks like a darker version of the tombs and crypts located above. It is entirely carved of black stone, engraved with strange, unsettling arcane symbols. The stone coffin seems made to hold a man-sized corpse; however, it has been overturned, its lid shattered and its contents gone. Whatever this room held, it must have been important; however, it is gone now.

There were four such graves in the ancient Athan temple, which priests called the Four Dark Tombs. They were used to bury the remains of the four founders of the Athan clergy's inner circle of demon worshippers. Each of these tombs used to hold great treasure and riches (plus a mummy) but they have already been desecrated and emptied by an unknown hand.

The doors leading to these tombs are carved with a life-size likeness of a human male dressed in luxurious clothes. The carving is represented holding out an open palm in front of him. The doors have no locks and thus no means of opening; when attempting to break them down, treat these doors as part of the wall (Break DC 35). A character may only open these doors by touching the carved human's open hand with his own hand; however, the character's hand must have suffered cold damage within the last 24 hours or be currently channelling cold energy; otherwise, touching the figure's hand is also useless. Casting *chill touch*, or any cold-based spell requiring the caster's hands to channel cold energy, counts as channelling cold energy for the purposes of opening the door. All the doors have an inscription, reading *Only the Cold; Only the Dead* in Draconic.

Area I: The Resting Place

These endless, labyrinthine caves form the base of Mount Moru, where the roots of the dark mountain grip the earth. Below this lies the deep and terrible Mount Moru underground. It is called the 'Resting Place' both literally, as the mountain indeed rests in this place, and ironically, regarding the thousands of people that have died in these dark warrens.

This area may be reached by descending the great pit from **H2** or by ascending from the giant tunnels at **J1** (which leads up to **I17**) and **J2** (leading up to **I18**). There also used to be a passage to the surface from **I2**; it led directly to the entrance of Old Moru Road. It is currently blocked by rubble.

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I1: The Bottom of the Pit

You reach a great dark cavern with no ceiling; the cave simply continues upward as far as the eye can see, which is not that much in these conditions.

This is the nadir of the Great Pit coming all the way down from the mountain peak, passing through the access at **H2**. It may be climbed up to reach **H2** after about two hours of climbing, or the outer slopes of Mount Moru after eight more hours. The upper exit of this pit ends in a hidden cave three days west from Moru Road. Both paths require a successful Climb check (DC 15) every hour; failure means one hour is added to the check. A natural 1 means the character falls into the abyss, suffering 20d6 points of falling damage (and reaching this chamber).

I2: The Rockslide

You reach a great cave that seems to have been a wide passage at some other time. There are the remains of a cobblestone road on certain spots of the cave floor and a huge mountain of rubble blocks the pass ahead.

This used to be the direct exit to the base of Mount Moru and the Old Moru Road, until a rockslide blocked it completely. By succeeding at a Survival check (DC 30), it would be possible to cause another, controlled landslide from here, which would cause the rubble to slip further, partially clearing the path again. It is possible to take 10 on the Survival check but not 20. Success causes a landslide with a 100-foot slide zone, burying all of **I2** and **I13**. All living creatures in the direct path of the falling rocks, including the character(s) that caused the landslide, suffer 8d6 points of crushing damage, with a Reflex save (DC 15) allowed for half damage. Creatures within a 50-foot radius of this path must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 15) or suffer 3d6 points of damage. A creature that fails its save is buried and takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage each minute; if the creature becomes unconscious, it must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) each minute or suffer 1d6 points of lethal damage until it dies. A buried character may dig free with a successful Strength check (DC 25). Characters that are not buried may dig out their friends; a free character working with his hands may free another character in a total amount of minutes equal to 2d4 minus the free character's Strength modifier (minimum of 1 minute). Halve the amount of time required if the adequate tools are used, such as picks and shovels. After the landslide, the path to Old Moru Road becomes open and accessible again, requiring only a successful Climb check (DC 10) to reach the outside; from now on, it becomes possible to enter **Area I** directly from Moru Road, without having to cross the upper dungeon first.

If the landslide is caused successfully, immediately roll on the random encounter table for **Area I**, as the echoes of the cave-in are sure to be heard far inside the caves.

I3: The Treasure Mound

The shadows flicker madly in this area, almost as if the light angered them...

For some reason, this specific spot in the caves is a reunion centre for shadow spirits, which gather around the place as if a dark force called them to here. Some say they are the faint shades of the Morudhain people, clinging to some remains of their culture and race...

Creatures (EL 9)

The shadows swarm into the area, rushing anyone that approaches their spot.

Shadows (8): hp 19 each; see 'Shadow' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

This is the burial place of the last treasures of the Morudhain tribe that entered Mount Moru and was massacred in the Resting Place. Their guide, the wise-woman Aedhaine, hid their treasures here just before succumbing to treachery and horror in the massacre site at **I10**. Finding the stash below the ground requires a successful Search check (DC 30). The treasure includes two jewelled silver torcs (575 gp each), a plain gold ceremonial mask (850 gp), a malachite plaque with a spiral-shaped engraving (80 gp), a silver-studded light steel shield (230 gp), an ebony carving of a half-dragon man (100 gp), a silver bracelet (270 gp), a golden bracelet (310 gp), a gold-and-copper chalice (185 gp), an old bronze helmet (60 gp), a Medium bronze shield with carvings depicting the sun (treat as a +1 *light steel shield*), a Medium bronze handaxe with a dragon carved on the head (treat as a +1 *handaxe*), a silver shield carved with the likeness of a faceplate and the words of a healing ritual written on the inside (treat as a *caster's shield* with a *cure moderate wounds* spell), a bronze sword hilt without a blade (actually a *ghost touch longsword*, always counts as made for the size of the wielder) and a bronze ring shaped like a dragon's head breathing a ring of fire (*minor ring of fire resistance*).

I4: The Great Web

The walls of this cave are covered with such an immense, thick mass of cobwebs it is visible even in the darkness. Once you get an idea of the sheer amount of webbing, every shadow begins to look more threatening...

This area is fully covered with webs, which reflect the light so strongly they almost seem to shine in comparison with the dark cavern walls. Amidst these, there is a web sheet 70 feet tall by 30 feet wide; characters must succeed at a Spot check (DC 22) or stumble against it and become entangled. Entangled creatures suffer a -2 penalty on attack rolls and a -4 penalty on Dexterity, plus they cannot move away from the area. An entangled creature cannot

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THE RESTING PLACE AS A DUNGEON

The resting place is a natural underground complex of wide, tall caves. It is all unworked stone; a single 10 foot by 10 foot square of wall has a thickness of five feet, hardness 8, Break DC 65 and 900 hit points.

A successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) check indicates the level is indeed the base of the mountain, at ground level; a dwarf senses it automatically without needing to make this check.

There are no natural light sources in the entire area. With cave walls being so far apart, there are few surfaces to reflect the light of lanterns or torches except for an uneven, craggy floor. This makes navigation of the Resting Place a difficult task, even with a light. For every hour a party spends exploring **Area I**, a successful Survival check (DC 15) is needed; failure means the party becomes lost, advancing in a random direction every hour unless a successful Survival check (DC 20 + 1 per additional hour) to recognise they are lost. Regaining the right direction requires a successful Survival check (DC 15 + 2 per each hour the party spent lost). More information about chances to become lost and its effects can be found in the *DMG*, Chapter Three, section 'Wilderness Adventures'.

Random Encounters in the Resting Place

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area I**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering a hostile creature, randomly determined or chosen from the following table:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREA I

D%	Encounter
01-10	1 Huge monstrous spider
11-25	1d4+1 shadows
26-40	1d4+1 wraiths
41-50	1d4+1 Huge monstrous spiders
51-70	1d6+5 shadows
71-80	1d6+5 wraiths
81-90	The Drow Search Party ¹
91-00	Keyed encounter ²

¹ This is a drow task force, sent to look for Khazi'id La'adorg (see **Area I12**) and bring him back to stand trial at the Drow Spire (**Area L**). The party consists of two drow mages and four drow soldiers. They attack anyone that stands in their way. Once they have been dealt with, it is unlikely they are encountered again; treat any further 81-90 roll on the table as a keyed encounter².

Creatures (EL 10)

5th Level Drow Wizards (2): CR 6; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 5d4+3; hp 15 each; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk +3 melee (1d6/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +4 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +4 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poisoned bolt, spells, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, immunity to *sleep*, light blindness, spell resistance 16, spell-like abilities; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Listen +5, Search +6, Spellcraft +7, Spot +5; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Scribe Scroll, Spell Mastery (*mage armour*, *magic missile*), Spell Penetration, Toughness.

Possessions: masterwork hand crossbow, masterwork rapier, *ring of protection* +2, case with 10 crossbow bolts.

Spells Prepared (4/4/3/1; spell DC 12 + spell level): 0th—*daze*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*; 1st—*mage armour*, *magic missile* (2), *true strike*; 2nd—*acid arrow* (2), *web*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*.

3rd Level Drow Fighters (4): CR 4; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 3d10-3; hp 13 each; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +7 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/18-20, masterwork rapier) or +7 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poisoned bolt, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft, drow traits, immunity to *sleep*, light blindness, spell resistance 14, spell-like abilities; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Intimidate +6, Listen +2, Search +4, Spot +2; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, masterwork rapier, masterwork scale mail, heavy steel shield, case with 10 crossbow bolts.

Poisoned bolt: Each of these drow is equipped with a single crossbow bolt smeared in knockout poison (Injury, Fort DC 13 negates, initial damage unconsciousness for one hour, secondary damage unconsciousness for 2d4 hours).

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The drow's other special abilities are explained in the corresponding section under 'Elf', in Chapter One of the *MM*.

² Choose the nearest keyed encounter/ area among **I4**, **I5**, **I8**, **I11** and **I15**; the creature inhabiting the chosen area leaves its lair and encounters the PCs. See the corresponding keyed encounter for more information about the creature encountered.

The statistics for all the other monsters in this table can be found in Chapter One of the *MM*, except for Huge

spiders, which are detailed in Chapter Three. corresponding section under 'Elf', in Chapter One of the *MM*.

² Choose the nearest keyed encounter/ area among **I4**, **I5**, **I8**, **I11** and **I15**; the creature inhabiting the chosen area leaves its lair and encounters the PCs. See the corresponding keyed encounter for more information about the creature encountered.

The statistics for all the other monsters in this table can be found in Chapter One of the *MM*, except for Huge spiders, which are detailed in Chapter Three.

cast spells with somatic components and must succeed at a DC 15 Concentration check to be able to cast any other spell. An entangled creature may break free via a successful Escape Artist check (DC 15), by a successful Strength check (DC 19) or by dealing 16 points of slashing or fire damage to the webs, which have damage reduction 5.

Creatures (EL 8)

A huge, bloated arachnid the size of a whale dwells in this cave, hunting the other inhabitants of the cave for a living. It does not frown on foreign meat, of course.

Gargantuan Monstrous Spider: hp 104; see 'Monstrous Spider' in Chapter Three of the *MM*.

Treasures

Scattered among the bones, webbing strands and other remains littering the cave, there are 163 gold pieces, a small piece of turquoise worth 120 gp, a piece of quartz worth 65 gp and a *potion of cat's grace*.

I5: The Banded God

There seems to be a pit here, amidst the stalagmites, right in the middle of this endless cave. A strong stench of carrion emanates from it.

This shallow pit (less than ten feet deep) leads into a short underground gallery, completely untouched by any natural light. The gallery features some rough carvings on the walls, featuring obscene demonic scenes in a crude, primitive style.

The cave belonged to an extremely ancient and primitive race, predating even the Athans. This ancient people revered demons and snakes, as shown on the loathsome carvings on the walls of this obvious ritual chamber.

Creatures (EL 9)

The primitive dwellers of the caves worshipped a monstrous snake-thing called The Banded God. The creature received their tribute and lived content with this and a couple of monthly sacrifices. It still lives here, in the

chamber once dedicated to its primitive faith. Now that its worshippers have become extinct, The Banded God lives alone and bored, forced to use trickery and illusion to live in these depths. If faced with intruders, it attempts to distract them with talk before attacking; for this purpose, it has a wealth of information about the past and present of Mount Moru. Additional information about the Banded God and what it has to say can be found in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 53.

The Banded God (Spirit Naga): hp 76; see the corresponding section under 'Naga' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

The Banded God still keeps the treasures and tributes it received from its worshippers, including 1,931 gold pieces of primitive coinage, a carved obsidian bowl worth 50 gp, a copper bracelet worth 35 gp, an obsidian statuette worth 115 gp and a ceremonial ritual mask, of unsettling similarity with Morudhain craft but somewhat more primal and sinister, worth 765 gp. In addition, there is a scroll with two *summon monster III* spells (CL 5), plus a *feather token (whip)*, a small talisman carved with the face of a demon (*brooch of shielding*) and a string of prayer beads, one of which is a *bead of force*.

I6: Poison Gas

There are many cracks on the floor of this area.

The ground here leads to many natural gas pockets, which emit noxious fumes all over the area.

Traps (EL 10)

The poisonous gas emanating from the ground here affects any characters traversing the area, poisoning them as described below. Finding the gas is quite difficult, as its smell is almost undetectable. As an alternative to the Search check, a character may succeed on a Survival check (DC 25) or Spot check (DC 25) to sense the gas; a Knowledge (dungeoneering) check (DC 20) is required to identify it as poisonous.

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Noxious Gas Pockets: CR 10; natural trap; location trigger; automatic reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 10 foot by 10 foot area); never miss; onset delay (1 round); poisonous gas (DC 20 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 Con/ 2d6 Con); Search DC 25; no Disable Device possible; no market price.

Treasure

The bottom of the cracks have many treasures belonging to creatures that have fallen in during the past years. These treasures include 1,113 gold pieces, an alexandrite gem (350 gp), a golden yellow topaz (675 gp), three pieces of rock crystal (worth 100 gp each) and an *oil of daylight* flask with two applications.

17: The Poison Web

You think you sense a faint glimmer in the darkness of this passage...

This area has a webbing trap, though it has been enhanced far beyond the abilities of a common web.

Traps (EL 11)

Tahi'ri the Thing (see 18) set up this mega-trap, one of the most dangerous ever devised, with the help of its spider pets. The web is a sheet 30 feet in diameter, covering almost the full span of the passage. The strands of this web have been carefully treated with alchemical elements, making it much harder to see; characters must succeed at a Spot check (DC 30) or stumble against it and become entangled. A Search check (DC 27) might also reveal the trap. Entangled creatures suffer a -2 penalty on attack rolls and a -4 penalty on Dexterity, plus they cannot move away from the area. An entangled creature cannot cast spells with somatic components and must succeed at a DC 15 Concentration check to be able to cast any other spell. An entangled creature may break free via a successful Escape Artist check (DC 28), by a successful Strength check (DC 32) or by dealing 18 points of slashing or fire damage to the webs, which have damage reduction 5. In addition, as soon as a character becomes entangled in the web and every round he tries to move after that, he suffers 2d6 points of slashing damage due to the incredible sharpness of the web strands. If that was not enough, the web is fully coated with strong poison, causing deadly weakening effects on any creature it has successfully injured. If any creature remains in the web for more than one minute, it is likely Tahi'ri the Thing (see 18) notices and comes to see what he caught.

Poisoned Web: CR 11; mechanical; touch trigger (trigger); repair reset; DC 30 Spot check avoids; entangle (Escape Artist DC 28 or Strength DC 32); multiple targets (first target in each of three adjacent 10-ft. squares); slashing strands (2d6 points of slashing damage per round); poison (drider poison, DC 16 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 Str/1d6

Str); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 27. *Market Price:* 74,250 gp.

18: Tahi'ri The Thing

This pitch-black cave has many clear signs that something inhabits it; not least among these signs are the cobwebs covering its floor to ceiling.

These caves are home to an exile from the dark elves, a mutated aberration that fled to the 'surface' (that is, the base of the mountain) to flee the loathing of his brethren.

Creatures (EL 9)

Tahi'ri the Thing is a monstrous abomination, half spider/half dark elf, exiled from the drow settlement located at **Area L**, where he got his 'Thing' nickname. Tahi'ri hates everything and everyone except for his spider pets, which he unleashes on anyone that enters his cave. He also makes occasional hunting forays to the nearby tunnels, just for the sake of killing things.

Tahi'ri the Thing (Drider): hp 45; see 'Drider' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Huge Monstrous Spiders (2): hp 52, see 'Monstrous Spider' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Tahi'ri's loot from his raids, kept wrapped in a webbing case stuck to the cave wall, consists of 1,407 gp, a jasper (45 gp), a moonstone (70 gp), a violet garnet (410 gp), a black silk noblewoman's dress with sewn pearls (380 gp), a silver ring with a black opal (1,150 gp), a *wand of web* (29 charges, CL 3) and a *scroll of cure serious wounds* (CL 5).

19: Descent to Doom

You reach the edge of a great pit, accessible by a flight of natural stone steps leading down from here. As you approach the stairs, an unnatural chill fills the air and the shadows seem to rush you...

This is the entrance to the Golgotha where Aedhaine's Morudhain tribe (whose full story is told in page 46 of *The Dragon Stone*) were slaughtered to the last man. The stone stairs descend for roughly 20 feet before reaching the pit below (**Area I10**).

Creatures (EL 11)

The stone steps have guards – a pack of undead spirits, the evil shades of the last Morudhain warriors, which attack any living thing attempting to walk down the stairs.

Wraiths (9): hp 32 each, see 'Wraith' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Iio: The Grave of the Morudhain

You enter a low trench, dozens of feet wide, where the bones of countless human men and women lie scattered around.

This 50 foot diameter earth pit is little more than a mass grave, where the Morudhain Dragon Stone clan was slaughtered by the dark forces inside Mount Moru (see *The Dragon Stone*, page 46, for more details about this story). The ground is littered with bones, as the Morudhain had no time or way to bury their dead. The closest thing to a marked grave in the area is the staff of the druid Aedhaine, fixed to the spot where its owner fell, at the exact centre of the pit.

Creatures (EL 12)

The spirits of the Morudhain still haunt the area; as soon as a living creature approaches the staff of Aedhaine, her spirit rises from the earth, together with the shades of her best warriors, to defend the spot. There is little point in trying to reason with Aedhaine's undead shade, as it has been twisted and corrupted by the very evil forces that slew her.

Aedhaine (Dread Wraith): hp 104; see 'Wraith' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Wraiths (4): hp 32 each; see 'Wraith' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

If Aedhaine's shade is destroyed, she turns into a bright, beautiful apparition before disappearing forever with a sigh of gratitude.

Treasure

Aedhaine's staff is made of thin, rune-carved black willow; the tip bears the spiral sign of the Dragon Stone Clan. It works as a *staff of divination* (CL 13) with 32 charges left. The place where the staff stands also indicates the burial place of another relic. Hidden beneath the earth, just below Aedhaine's staff, there is a minuscule, almost invisible, tear-shaped ruby, worth at least 10,000 gold pieces; finding and unearthing it requires a successful Search check (DC 30). This incredibly valuable item radiates no magic, though it is surely not an ordinary ruby. Perhaps other books might contain some more information about its nature and origin...

Iii: The East Graveyard

This cave seems to have been transformed into a cemetery. There are at least a dozen gravestones here, or what seem to be gravestones. The headstones have no visible markings or names. What is more eerie is the presence of half a dozen torches illuminating the area... someone must have put these torches here...

This is a small graveyard, erected by unknown hands, containing 13 unmarked gravestones. The bones of an unidentified human are buried below each of the graves. It can be safely assumed that some foreign explorer erected the graves to bury his relatives or companions, dead at the hands of the many dangers found in these caves. The gravestones have no indication or inscription revealing the identity of their occupants. Since this area is so similar to **I12**, it is possible they were originally the same graveyard and the cave wall separating them was created by a cave-in.

Creatures (EL 12)

Kuro, a demonic ogre from faraway lands, has settled in this graveyard, where he has been using the corpses within the graves for necromantic purposes, somehow related to his worship of dark gods of death. He knows the full story behind the Morudhain and their slaughter, though he charges highly for the information; at least 1,000 gp in coin or valuable items or a reasonably whole corpse. If characters do not ask for information (or even if they do), Kuro is not above attempting to harvest their living bodies for his dark pursuits. More details about Kuro, his dark faith and the information he has can be found in page 54 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Kuro (Ogre Mage Ftr1/Clr3): CR 12; Large giant; HD 5d8+20 plus 1d10+4 plus 3d8+12; hp 77; Init +0; Spd



40 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 20*, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +6; Grp +17; Atk +8* melee (2d6+16*/x3, halberd); Full Atk +8/+3* melee (2d6+16*/x3, halberd); Space/Reach 10 ft./ 10 ft.; SA rebuke undead 5/day, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 90 ft., low-light vision, regeneration 5, spell resistance 19; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +2, Will +9; Str 24, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 20, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +13, Spellcraft +15, Spot +13; Cleave, Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (halberd).

*Modifiers for Power Attack (−3 attack/ +6 damage) and Combat Expertise (−2 attack/ +2 AC) are already applied.

Spells Prepared (4/4+1/2+1; spell DC 15 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, inflict minor wounds* (2), *mending*; 1st—*bane, cause fear**, *command, doom, hide from undead*; 2nd—*desecrate, shatter**, *silence*.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, melee touch attack kills single creature with 5d6 hp or less), Destruction (smite power 1/day, +4 attack/ +3 damage).

Possessions: Large masterwork halberd, oriental style armour (treat as Large mithral chain shirt), silver holy symbol, 2 *oils of magic weapon*.

Kuro's other special abilities are explained under 'Ogre Mage' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

In addition to his possessions, Kuro keeps a treasure cache, hidden in an obviously opened and excavated tomb. This treasure includes 3,992 gold pieces, two golden burial masks (135 gold pieces each), a silver bracelet (80 gp), a jewelled silver torc (380 gp) and a bronze necklace with a skull pendant (65 gp), plus six smokesticks and two *animate dead* scrolls.

112: The West Graveyard

This cave is full of headstones with no visible markings or names. There is a light in a corner, which is somewhat startling compared to the all-pervading darkness in other cave areas. The light emanates from what seems to be a shack in a corner of the cave...

This is a small graveyard, erected by unknown hands, containing fifteen unmarked gravestones. The bones of an unidentified human are buried below each of the graves. The graves may have been dug by foreign explorers, to bury relatives or companions killed at the hands of some local monster. The gravestones have no indication or inscription revealing the identity of their occupants.

Since this area is so similar to **I11**, it is possible they were originally the same graveyard and the cave wall separating them was created by a cave-in.

There is an improvised shack, hastily yet skilfully built from gathered stone and timber, in the cave's northeast corner. The light emanating from the shack is generated by an *everburning torch* on its wall.

Creatures (EL 10)

The shack is the temporary home of Khazi'id La'adorg, a dark elf explorer and necromancer that appointed himself the caretaker of this graveyard. Khazi'id is a bit touched; he speaks to the graves as if they were his friends as he seeks for necromantic components among the graves. His necromantic pursuits and peculiar behaviour forced him to escape the dark elf city at **Area L**, where he is still a wanted man. Khazi'id is quite an authority on underground survival and corpse handling. He knows many things about the other places or creatures in **Area I**, including the existence of Kuro and the other half of this graveyard in **I11**. Kazi'id is ready to bargain with anyone bringing him proof of Kuro's death, which would allow Khazi'id to take over his half of the graveyard. If threatened or attacked, Khazi'id is more than able to defend himself.

Khazi'id La'adorg (Drow Rgr2/Wiz7): CR 10; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 2d8 plus 7d4+3; hp 33; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d6+2/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +9 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+2/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +7 ranged (1d4/19-20, 2 masterwork hand crossbows); SA combat style (two-weapon fighting), favoured enemy (undead) +2, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft, drow traits, immunity to *sleep*, light blindness, spell resistance 20, spell-like abilities, wild empathy; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Craft (woodcraft) +9, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (nature) +13, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Profession (undertaker) +5, Search +9, Spellcraft +15, Spot +7, Survival +5; Alertness^B, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Toughness, Track^B, Widen Spell.

Possessions: 2 masterwork hand crossbows, masterwork short sword, dark leather rags (+1 *leather armour*), case with 20 crossbow bolts.

Spells Prepared (4/5/4/3/2; spell DC 14 + spell level): 0th—*disrupt undead* (2), *ghost sound, mending*; 1st—*chill touch* (2), *detect undead, summon monster I, unseen servant*; 2nd—*command undead* (3), *summon swarm*; 3rd—*halt undead* (2), *stinking cloud*; 4th—*animate dead* (2).

THE INNER MOUNTAIN

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*cause fear, chill touch, detect undead, expeditious retreat, identify, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, summon monster I, unseen servant*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness, command undead, ghoul touch, summon swarm*; 3rd—*gentle repose, halt undead, sepia snake sigil, stinking cloud*; 4th—*animate dead, contagion*.

Khazi'id's other special abilities are detailed in the 'Drow' section under 'Elf', in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Scavenger (Khazi'id's Rat Familiar): CR —; Tiny magical beast; HD ¼d8 (counts as 9 HD); hp 16; Init +2; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +0; Grp -12; Atk +7 melee (1d3-4, bite); Full Atk +7 melee (1d3-4, bite); Space/Reach 2 ½ ft./ 0 ft.; SQ deliver touch spells, empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, scent, share spells, speak with master, speak with rats; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +12, Hide +14, Move Silently +11, Swim +10; Weapon Finesse.

Scavenger's special qualities are detailed in Chapter 3 of the *PHB*.

Treasure

In addition to his possessions, Khazi'id keeps the following items under a table in his makeshift shelter: 1,504 gold pieces, 2 dark round stones (strange drow gems, 750 gp each), an alexandrite gem (500 gem), a iolite gem (45 gp), a *greater magic weapon* scroll, an *everburning torch* and 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*.

113: The Stone of Death

There is a small standing stone against the wall here. There seems to be some symbols and inscriptions etched on it.

This is the last of the standing stones left to mark the passage of the Dragon Stone Morudhain clan. The stone is both a goodbye and a reminder of this tribe; it is carved with the spiral sign representing The Dragon Stone Clan.

The standing stone has some writings etched on its surface; a character that speaks the Morudhain tongue or succeeds at a Decipher Script check (DC 20) may read the following:

*We Arrived Here
We Go No Further*

A successful Craft (stonework) check (DC 15), Search check (DC 20) or Survival check (DC 20) reveals the stone was carved and left here more than a year ago.

114: The Lost Merchant

You reach an illuminated section of the cave, which is a strange occurrence at these forsaken depths. The light seems to come from a bonfire near the far cave wall.

There is a full camping site here, complete with a bedroll, a blanket, cooking tools, a makeshift cave shelter made of piled rocks and of course a large bonfire. Whoever started the fire has very limited knowledge about underground survival; this lack of expertise is quickly noticeable by a successful Survival check (DC 10).

Creatures (EL 7)

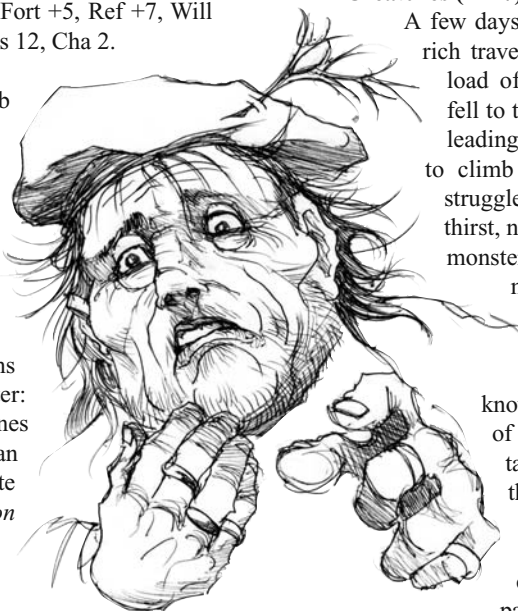
A few days ago, Uberto Valcio Wendolino, a rich travelling merchant with an important load of wares from neighbouring lands, fell to this cave through one of the cracks leading down from the outside at **I2**; unable to climb back, he became lost and now struggles for survival against starvation, thirst, natural hazards and the unnameable monsters inhabiting the area. The poor man has been driven to the edge of madness by this ordeal, though he still retains enough sanity to know he wants to get out. He knows where the accesses leading out of **Area I** are, though he dares not take them; he spent two days like that until he came to his senses and erected a crude but effective camp at this otherwise vacant cave. If confronted with strangers, particularly humans, Valcio acts as

if he had been saved, assuming any intelligent human he meets will obviously know of and take him to a way out. He is willing to pay handsomely for a character to indicate an exit to him, or better yet, escort him to it. Valcio's full story, as well as his knowledge and possessions, are detailed on pages 54 and 112 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Valcio The Merchant: hp 49; see page 112 of *Tales of Mount Moru* for a full description.

115: The Echo Cavern

You descend to a cave so full of stalagmites it is almost impossible to walk in. The stalactites on the ceiling are equally numerous. Every breath and step you take is returned by an echo... or was that another noise?



THE INNER MOUNTAIN

This cave is naturally acoustic-friendly, echoing almost any sound made inside it. Listen checks made inside the cave have a +2 circumstance bonus.

Creatures (EL 11)

Two strange, primitive monsters, the size of flying dinosaurs, have come to live here. They have crude leathery wings and a rudimentary sound-emitting organ, allowing them to fight using sonic waves. They swoop screeching on any living creature entering their cave.

Yrthaks (2): hp 102; see 'Yrthak' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

I**1b**: Eern's Post

You reach a somewhat narrower pass in the caves. There are high rock walls on either side, both adorned with great torches, which cannot be a natural occurrence. There seem to be smaller caves atop both walls. Suddenly a boulder falls...

This 20 foot wide pass is flanked by two 40 foot tall rock walls, atop which there are many vantage points from which to watch the surroundings, as well as a couple of good spots for shelter and rest. Going up one of these walls requires a successful Climb check (DC 15). The great torches mounted on both walls give shadowy light to the entire pass. The area visible from atop the walls does not offer much to see, except for the tunnels leading down from **I17** and **I18** and the cave at **I11**.

Creatures (EL 11)

Anatri, the frost giant matriarch from **Area J**, sent one of her elite scouts to watch this spot and prevent any of the creatures from the Resting Place from descending to their realm via **I18**. This scout, called Eern, has lived atop the right wall of the pass for several months, climbing down or simply dropping boulders on anyone that attempts to come through. It was him who put the torches there, to facilitate his vigilance.

Eern, Male Frost Giant Rgr2: CR 11; Large giant; HD 14d8+84 plus 2d8+12; hp 168; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +12; Grp +26; Atk +21 melee (2d6+15/x3, battleaxe) or +21 melee (1d4+10, slam) or +13 ranged (2d6+10, boulder); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+10/x3, battleaxe) and +19 melee (1d8+5/x3, handaxe) or +21 melee (1d4+10, 2 slams) or +13 ranged (2d6+10, boulder); Space /Reach 10 ft./ 10 ft.; SA combat style (two-weapon fighting), favoured enemy (giants) +2, rock throwing; SQ immunity to cold, low-light vision, rock catching, vulnerability to fire; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 31, Dex 13, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Craft (woodworking) +6, Hide +0, Intimidate +5, Jump +22, Listen +10, Move Silently +4, Spot +14; Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Track^B.

Possessions: Large battleaxe, Large handaxe, Large masterwork chain shirt.

Eern's special abilities are detailed under 'Giant' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Eern prefers to throw boulders at intruders and then hide among the crevices at his high position, making it appear like the boulder fell naturally. If he is denied this strategy, he climbs or jumps down as quickly as possible to face his opponents before they reach **Area I17** or **I18**.

Treasure

In addition to his possessions, Eern has a giant's bag and enough meat for 30 days of trail rations at his post atop the east wall. Eern's giant bag contains 3 throwing rocks, a great wooden spool handle, a 20-pound loaf of bread, a gigantic bone comb, another 2,070 gold pieces scattered all over the bag, an enormous tinderbox with adequately large flint and steel, a 120-foot rope, a great fur cloak made of smelly and lice-ridden patched hides of various unidentified beasts, a *potion of fire resistance*, a cooking pot made of a fire giant's bronze helmet, a dirty and rank toothpick (actually a *wand of hold person* with 48 charges), three fire giant beards and a pouch made of a winter wolf's scrotum. The pouch contains 458 gold pieces, a diamond (900 gp), a worthless-looking piece of crystal (actually an *air elemental gem*) and four amethysts (120 gp each).

I**17**: Into The Fire

As you approach this tunnel, you are assaulted by a waft of hot air, accompanied by the smell of burning fire and a faint reddish glow.

This sloping passage leads down below Mount Moru, opening into **Area J1** after a two-hour descent.

I**18**: Into The Cold

The temperature seems to decrease subtly as you enter this passage and the cold breeze only gets stronger as you advance.

This sloping passage leads down below the mountain, opening directly into **Area J2** after a two-hour descent.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

Starting from here, the mount Moru dungeon actually becomes an underground complex; this section is located well below the mountain roots, ultimately leading into vast subterranean realms and – some say – Hell itself.

This section of Mount Moru comprises the following Areas:

Area J. The Giant Caves

Two giant lairs adjacent to each other, one a fiery inferno, another a complex of freezing catacombs; this level is the stage of a war between two giant tribes.

Area K. The Dark Warrens

Subterranean caves inhabited by unknown creatures from the deep and a giant tribe that worships them.

Area L. The Drow Spire

A stronghold erected by dark elves, from which they tyrannise other underground races.

Special Area. Ogginnogg

The city of the deep gnomes is not a dungeon level, though it connects to both **Area L** and **Area M**. It is fully detailed on page 50 of the atlas of Mount Moru and its surroundings, known as *The Dragon Stone*.

Area M. Dwergard

This is the deepest civilised settlement in the vicinity of Mount Moru; a dwarven fortress so deep and isolated it is virtually unknown.

Area N. The Lightless Depths

This area, allegedly connected to the bottom of the ocean, is the utmost nadir of the Mount Moru dungeon; a place so deep there cannot be anything below it but Hell itself,

inhabited only by the darkest, most fearsome creatures of darkness, forgotten millennia ago by a world that has gotten too used to living on the surface.

Area J: The Giant Caves

These are two underground galleries, very similar in area and disposition, though diametrically opposed in other characteristics; one of them is hellish and fiery, the other is freezing cold. For many years, each of these galleries has served as the home of a tribe of giants, which has always been the mortal enemy of the tribe on the other side.

The giant caves are only accessible via a two-hour sloping descent from the mountain base (**Area I**), which ends at either the **J1** or **J2** entrance (depending on whether the access at **I17** or **I18** was used). It is also conceivable to reach the area by climbing the pit from **Area K1**, which leads to the sacred pit at **J16**. However, the access is quite difficult and dangerous; enough to dissuade even flying creatures from trying it. It bears noticing that this **J16** access is actually the reason why the two giant tribes fight each other and is the final prize of their struggle.

More information about the giant tribes and their feud can be found in page 56 of the tome entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Ji: Fire Gates

You approach the entrance of a tunnel. Even though the temperature here is already quite high, the passage beyond this point must be much hotter, as it has a reddish glow that contrasts starkly against the entrance's dark rock walls. Suddenly a booming voice greets you...

This is the entrance to the fire giant section of **Area J**. The intense heat from the tunnels beyond this point does not apply until a character has crossed the entrance. It is possible to detect the severe heat conditions beyond the passage without crossing it, by succeeding on a Survival check (DC 10).

Creatures (EL 10)

The fire giants have stationed a monstrous being from the Elemental Plane of Fire in this entrance, as a guard for their lair. The creature warns all intruders against trespassing, attempting to use intimidation and casting *wall of fire* when intimidation fails. As a last resort it attacks; however, it can be easily bribed or convinced to betray its fire giant masters.

Noble Salamander: hp 112; see 'Salamander' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

THE TRAVELLING SEAL

The ancient curse cast by the Gods to imprison the Athan dragon lords and the fiends they summoned (see *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 50, for the full story) covers the Mount Moru underground with a powerful enchantment equal to a permanent *dimensional lock* effect at caster level 50. This effect works against any kind of astral or dimensional travel, including spells of the teleportation subschool, so as to ensure the horrors brought by the Athans would never return to the Mortal Plane. Therefore, no dimensional travel is possible inside, into or out of Areas **J**, **K**, **L**, **M** or **N**. The source of the Travelling seal can be found in **Area O25**, inside the ruins of Archaneroth itself.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

THE GIANT CAVES AS A DUNGEON

The west wing of the Giant Caves (the fire giant area) is mostly unworked stone, with every 10 foot by 10 foot wall section having a thickness of five feet, hardness 8, 900 hp and a Break DC of 65. The east wing (the frost giant area) is hewn stone, with walls having a three foot thickness, hardness 8, 540 hp and a Break DC of 50.

Both halves of this level are lit via *everburning torches*, set all over the tunnels at 40-foot intervals, giving dim illumination to the entire area.

Climate in the Giant Caves

The temperature in this dungeon is also somewhat of a mystery; although the presence of hotspots and lava pits is not that strange at certain depths, the west wing has such hot temperature it hints at a magical origin. By the same token, it is unnatural for an underground area to have such concentrations of ice and frost as the east wing. This becomes even more remarkable when considering both climates coexist quite closely, which in itself is an aberration of the laws of nature. It is possible these caves are somehow connected to the elemental plane; it may also be the hand of a god (or gods) of the giant race at work.

The West Wing: The fire giant section counts as severe heat (150+° F), requiring a Fortitude save (DC 15+1 per each previous save) every ten minutes a character spends in the area. A character wearing heavy clothes or armour takes a -4 penalty on the save. If the save fails, the character suffers 1d4 points of nonlethal damage; a character reduced to unconsciousness by these means begins taking lethal damage at a rate of 1d4

points every ten minutes. The nonlethal damage thus caused cannot be healed until the character is cooled down by resting in the shade or drinking lots of water or receiving a *protection from elements* spell and so on.

The East Wing: This area is always considered severe cold (less than 0° F), requiring a Fortitude save (DC 15+1 per each previous save) every ten minutes a character spends in the area (or every hour is the character is wearing winter clothes or any kind of non-magical cold protection). If the save fails, the character suffers 1d6 points of nonlethal damage and becomes fatigued (-2 to Strength and Dexterity, cannot run or charge); a character reduced to unconsciousness by these means begins taking lethal damage at a rate of 1d6 points every ten minutes. The nonlethal damage thus caused cannot be healed until the character is out of the cold and warmed up again.

The Travelling Seal

Area J is affected by the Travelling Seal (see page 64), the curse placed by the gods on the dungeons beneath Mount Moru. No dimensional travel is possible into, inside or out of this area; treat as a permanent *dimensional lock* effect (CL 50) on the entire level.

Random Encounters in the Giant Caves

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area J**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering 1d2 fire giants (if they are in the west wing) or 1d2+1 frost giants (if they are in the east wing). The statistics for both monsters can be found under 'Giant' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

The creature carries a red-hot +3 *longspear* (Medium), which deals 1d8 points of fire damage to an unprotected character touching it. If taken outside the fire giant caves and allowed to cool down, the weapon stops dealing damage and becomes a normal +3 *longspear*.

12: Frost Giant Guard Room

This is a dirty lodging, with green-glowing torches on the whitish walls, a fur cot against the wall and a gigantic leather sack sprawled on the icy floor.

These rooms are used as quarters for Anatri's frost giant soldiers. Each of these rooms is inhabited by a single frost giant.

Creatures (EL 9)

The frost giant stationed at this post attacks any intruder without hesitation.

Frost Giant: hp 133; see the corresponding entry under 'Giant' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

In addition to his Large weapons and armour, each of these guards has a giant's bag containing makeshift cooking implements, a drinking horn, spare fur cloaks, grimy grooming gear and rare meat worth 10 days of trail rations. The bag also contains roughly 1,200 gold pieces and two *potions of fire resistance* supplied by the frost giant command.

13: Fire Giant Guard Room

This is obviously some kind of living quarters for a large creature. There is a stone bed covered with what may be red cloth or linen, a small lava pit that may be natural or dug in, and a large bag with assorted items inside.

These are common fire giant barracks, where fire giant soldiers live and stand guard.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

Creatures (EL 10)

The fire giants stationed at these barracks demand to know the identity of any intruder as they attack. They always attempt to capture an enemy alive, unless it proves too much of a hassle.

Fire Giant: hp 142; see the corresponding entry under ‘Giant’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

In addition to his oversized weapons and armour, each of these guards has a giant’s bag containing a gigantic tinderbox, makeshift dishes and digging implements, a drinking horn, tattered tidying tools and dry meat equal to 10 days of trail rations. The bag also contains roughly 1,500 gold pieces and three *potions of cold resistance* supplied by the frost giant command.

J4: Unnatural Cold

As you enter this area, you are assaulted by the bitterest, cruellest cold you have ever experienced...

A couple of spots in the frost giant section are, somehow, directly connected to the cold elemental planes, which makes them much colder than other areas, to the point they freeze unprotected creatures almost on the spot. Frost giants are immune to the effect of such unnatural cold, but even they feel a light chill when entering these areas.

Traps (EL 11)

These areas are deadly freezing traps for anyone not immune to cold. The effects activate immediately against any creature entering the area.

Unnatural Cold Area: CR 11; natural trap; location trigger; automatic reset; multiple targets (all targets in a 10 foot by 20 foot area); never miss; onset delay (1 round); extreme cold (10d6 cold damage, DC 15 Fortitude save halves); Search DC 20; no Disable Device possible; no market price.

J5: The Pyre Priest

These living quarters are rather tidy for a volcanic cave. There is a stone bed, wrapped in fine red cloth, some symbols hanging from the wall and a large, half-opened bag on the floor. There is a natural fire pit near the bed, on which some rocks are being heated for some purpose.

This is the room of the fire giant priest; located in the same cave as the fire giant’s sacred pit (see **J7**). The symbols on the wall are carvings and crude bronze icons depicting the fire giant god Surtur.

Creatures (EL 11)

Urt, the fire giant priest, lives in this chamber; if faced with intruders, he bellows for the guard at the **J3** area across from the tunnel and then attacks on his own.

Urt, the Fire Giant Priest (Male Fire Giant Clr1): CR 11; Large giant; HD 15d8+90 plus 1d8+6; hp 168; Init -2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 7, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +11; Grp +26; Atk +22 melee (2d6+11/19-20, longsword) or +21 melee (1d4+11, slam) or +9 ranged (2d6+11 plus 2d6 fire, boulder); Full Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (2d6+11/19-20, longsword) or +21 melee (1d4+11, 2 slams) or +9 ranged (2d6+11 plus 2d6 fire, boulder); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA rebuke undead 5/day, rock throwing; SQ immunity to fire, low-light vision, rock catching, vulnerability to cold; AL LE; SV Fort +17, Ref +3, Will +13; Str 32, Dex 6, Con 23, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Craft (blacksmithing) +6, Intimidate +8, Jump +10, Knowledge (religion) +2, Spot +16; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)^B.

Spells Prepared (3/2+1; spell DC 14 + spell level): 0th—guidance, mending, resistance; 1st—burning hands*, endure elements, magic weapon.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Fire (turn or destroy water creatures/ rebuke or bolster fire creatures 5/day), War (Proficiency and focus with longsword).

Urt’s other special abilities are detailed under ‘Giant’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Possessions: Large longsword, Large heavy steel shield, Large half-plate armour, holy symbol, *scroll of flame strike*.

Treasure

Urt’s giant bag contains a gigantic necklace of fist-sized prayer beads, an oversized tinderbox containing flint and steel and 670 gold pieces, a consecrated bowl made of a rune-carved frost giant’s skull, a grimy dinner plate (actually a small steel shield inlaid with gold and garnets, worth 750 gp), two flasks of unholy water, 1,903 gold pieces scattered all over, a roughly-carved replacement holy symbol, a carved ebony effigy of Surtur (worth 81 gold pieces), a whetstone the size of a catapult missile, three *potions of cold resistance*, enough charred dry meat for 20 days of trail rations, five oil flasks and the bones of several frost giant children, which he uses on divinations.

J6: Guard Post

You come across two well-armed frost giants, who were polishing their weapons and talking to each other in their own tongue.

This is a guard post, where frost giants take turns to watch over the prisoners at **J8**.

Creatures (EL 11)

The two frost giants guarding the area charge any intruder, intent on capturing them and adding them to their captives at J8.

Frost giant guards (2): hp 133; see the corresponding section under 'Frost Giant' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Besides their weapons and armour, each of these giants carries three *potions of fire resistance*, supplied by the frost giant command. They have left their giant's bags elsewhere.

J7: The Pyre Pit

You stand across the edge of a fiery pit, half natural crack and half masonry work. Flames spew regularly from the pit, as if they had intelligent life of their own.

The fire giants use this pit for sacred rituals and sacrifices, overseen by Urt the priest (see **J5**). Any creature coming too close to the pit suffers 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per round from the intense heat. If the creature touches the pit, it suffers 1d6 points of fire damage and must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 15) or catch on fire, suffer 1d6 points of fire damage every round until it succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 15). A living creature that falls into the pit suffers 4d6 points of fire damage per round (no save).

Creatures (EL 11)

There is a great fire spirit here, which uses this pit as a conduit between its home plane and the Prime Material. Urt, the fire giant priest, considers the fire spirit as a manifestation of the will of Surtur and has learned to summon it forth with special offerings. If the pit is disturbed in any way, the fire spirit springs out of the pit to deal with the disturbance.

Elder Fire Elemental: hp 204; see 'Fire Elemental' under 'Elemental' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

J8: The Prisoners

There are two small, apparently humanoid creatures chained to the far wall of this cave. Their greyish, earthy skin gives them the look of small earthenware, animated effigies...

This is the prisoner area for the frost giants. There are three sets of chains in the area, one of them occupied.

Creatures (EL 0)

Two stone giant children from **Area K** have been captured and brought here by frost giant raiders. Their stout racial personality prevents them from crying or otherwise showing their fear, however they are indeed quite lonely

and afraid. They will not dare to speak to anyone, although they understand Giant; they do not defend themselves if attacked. The motivations behind the kidnapping of these infants and its implications are detailed in page 60 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

J9: Fire Giant Guards

This wide passage is guarded by two well-armed fire giants, apparently unwilling to grant passage to just anyone.

Paths marked **J9** lead to particularly important spots inside the Fire Giant Caves; they are always guarded by at least two fire giant soldiers.

Creatures (EL 12)

Two fire giants stand guard on this passage at all times, seizing any intruder that enters uninvited.

Fire giant Guards (2): hp 142; see the corresponding section under 'Giant' in chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Besides their weapons and armour, these fire giants have two *potions of cold resistance* each; they have left their giant's bags elsewhere.

J10: Habitation

You see not one, but several frost giants of varied ages and sizes. They all react to your intrusion with sudden anger, followed by sadistic intent.

These rooms are conditioned to accommodate up to three Large creatures, with fur-lined cots, two torches and an array of crude household items. The only exit from these rooms leads to the main chamber of the frost giants, leading to Anatri's chamber (**J14**).

Creatures (EL 11+)

Each of these rooms houses a family of frost giants, including 1d2+1 adults, 1 non-combatant (child or infant) and a winter wolf. They attack gleefully, as 'intruders' often means 'captives'. These are all close relatives of Lady Anatri, so she is duly angered if any of them is hurt.

Also, there is a 35% chance Anatri herself (see **J14**) is currently present at one of these chambers, visiting relatives or else resting herself.

Frost Giants (2-3): hp 133; see the corresponding section under 'Giant' in chapter One of the *MM*.

Winter Wolf: hp 51; see 'Winter Wolf' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

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Treasure

These frost giants do not use giant's bags to stash their belongings; instead they hide their valuables under their fur beds. Each room has a hidden stash of 2,500+2d100 gold pieces, 2d4 assorted gems worth 100 gp each and 4 *potions of fire resistance*.

J1: Fneir Firefists

This cave could seem to be conditioned as living quarters, if those flat stones over there could be called a bed and the coarse gravel could be called a carpet...

At a first glance, this seems to be a typical fire giant guard room, though it is much more sparse and austere, as if its occupant was accustomed to a frugal lifestyle. The bed is a plain flat stone slab, there are no torches or light sources except for a natural fire pit in a corner and the only visible food is a meagre piece of charred bread that would not fill a goblin, much less a fire giant. However, such accommodations are perfect for Fneir Firefists, King Maladrev's bodyguard.

There are two exits from this cave, one leading southeast to the main area and another hidden behind a secret door in the north wall, requiring a Search check (DC 30) to find. This leads to King Maladrev's room, which is also the fire giant's treasure room.

Creatures (EL 12)

Fneir Firefists is feared and admired among fire giants for his fighting prowess and discipline, as well as for his unwavering loyalty to King Maladrev and, more importantly, for his unabated cruelty. Firefists rarely talks, concentrating on the task at hand, which is usually to kill anyone that enters his cave without a good reason.

Fneir Firefists, male fire giant

Mnk2: CR 12; Large giant; HD 15d8+90 plus 2d8+12; hp 178; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +12; Grp +31; Atk +22 melee (1d8+11, unarmed) or +14 ranged (2d6+11 plus 2d6 fire, boulder); Full Atk +22 melee (1d8+11, unarmed) or +20/+20 melee (1d8+11, unarmed flurry) or +14 ranged (2d6+11 plus 2d6 fire,

boulder); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA flurry of blows, rock throwing; SQ immunity to fire, low-light vision, rock catching, vulnerability to cold; AL LE; SV Fort +18, Ref +10, Will +14; Str 33, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +17, Craft (woodcarving) +6, Intimidate +5, Jump +21, Listen +8, Spot +16, Tumble +8; Cleave, Combat Reflexes^B, Great Cleave, Improved Grapple^B, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Fneir's other special abilities are detailed in the 'Fire Giant' section under 'Giant' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

J2: Guard Wolves

As you enter this area, you face a hellish vision; two wolves the size of elephants, with furs the colour of winter and eyes of deathly blue, growl and advance towards you snapping their monstrous jaws...

This chamber was opened to house the frost giant matriarch's pets. It is littered with refuse and half-eaten prisoners.

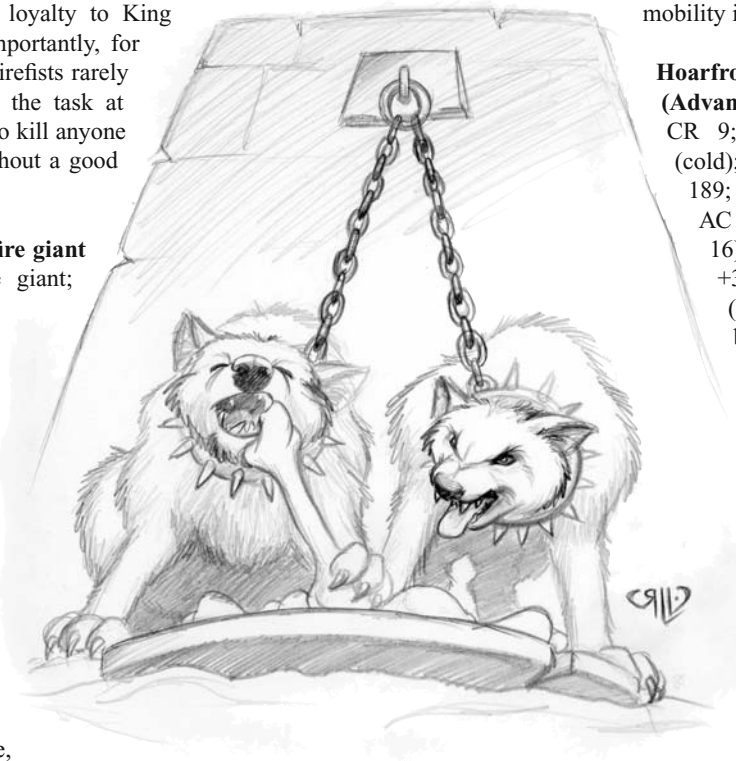
Creatures (EL 11)

Hoarfrost and Blizzard, two gigantic white wolves, are kept in this area, tied to the walls via mammoth chains. They are given scarce food so as to keep them hungry and alert, so they always attack anyone entering their territory.

The wolves' chains allow them full mobility inside their chamber.

Hoarfrost and Blizzard (Advanced Winter Wolves):

CR 9; Huge magical beast (cold); HD 18d10+90; hp 189; Init +5; Speed 60 ft.; AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 16); Base Atk +18; Grp +34; Atk +18* melee (3d6+26* plus 1d6 cold, bite); Full Atk +18* melee (3d6+26* plus 1d6 cold, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./ 10 ft.; SA breath weapon, freezing bite, trip; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, low-light vision, scent, vulnerability to fire; AL NE; SV Fort +16, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 26, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10.



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Skills and Feats: Hide +4 (+11 in snow and ice), Listen +15, Move Silently +11, Spot +15, Survival +6 (+10 when tracking by scent); Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Power Attack, Snatch, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

*Includes modifiers from Power Attack (-7 attack, +14 damage)

Breath weapon (Su): 20-foot cone once every 1d4 rounds, damage 6d6 cold, Reflex half DC 24 (Constitution-based).

Freezing bite (Su): Hoarfrost and Blizzard deal 1d6 points of additional cold damage with their bites.

Trip (Ex): If Hoarfrost or Blizzard hit with a bite attack, they can make a trip attempt (+16 bonus) against their opponent without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. They cannot be tripped as a response to their own trip attempt.

Treasure

Although they are only pets, nobody among the frost giants is dumb enough to deny Hoarfrost and Blizzard their small share of booty. Among the remains of their victims they keep 185 gold pieces, two emeralds (550 gp each) and a *ring of chameleon power*.

113: The King's Hall

You enter an opulent cave, adorned with red and black tapestries and illuminated by great stone candelabras with green fire torches. A large stone mound, vaguely reminiscent of a big chair or throne, can be seen on the far wall.

This is the throne room of King Maladrev, where he makes all public appearances. As his fire giant band has barely a dozen members, he is not much of a king nor has much need of public appearances. Nonetheless, Maladrev endeavours to treat the matter with all the proper rites and ceremonials; this throne room is one of them.

Creatures (EL 13)

Maladrev is here most of the time (75% chance), scolding some of his subordinates or simply reflecting on the best way to conquer the frost giants and the sacred pit. For more information on Maladrev, his history and goals, the compilation known as *Tales of Mount Moru* includes his biography on page 56.

Maladrev, the Fire Giant King: hp 184; see *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 113.

114: The Sacred Hall

This is a great chamber of freezing hewn stone, palely illuminated by the green fire from several torches mounted on sconces on the wall. There is also a strange mystic-looking circle on the floor, as well as what appears to be a large, closed window on the far wall...

This is the main chamber of the frost giant area, which the Lady Anatri uses as both her audience and summoning room. The chamber is completely bare, except for a summoning circle on the floor and a 10 foot diameter round stone window on the east wall.

Creatures (EL 12+)

Anatri, the high priestess and matriarch of the frost giant band, practices her evil rituals and exerts her command over her followers from this chamber. It is 65% likely she will be found here, performing some ritual or speaking to her subordinates. If faced with intruders, her first reaction is disdainful curiosity, which soon turns to unbridled anger in most cases. If she decides to fight, she blows on her war horn, calling all of her frost giants to her chamber. The full story and description of Anatri is related in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Anatri, the Frost giant Matriarch: hp 198; see *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

The treasure of Anatri's people is hidden below this chamber, under a secret trapdoor requiring a successful Search check (DC 30) to open. The frost giants' booty includes 1,908 gold pieces, 341 platinum pieces, three pieces of rock crystal (60 gp each), two unidentified faceted gems (frost giant stones, 550 gp each), a bronze and ivory war horn (+2 on Perform (wind instruments) checks, 350 gp), a *soften earth and stone* scroll, a gold-tipped ornamental spear (701 gp), a darkwood heavy wooden shield (107 gp), a *wand of silence* (38 charges), a silver and aquamarine necklace (990 gp), a jade statuette representing an unknown tiger-headed god (580 gp), a scroll with two *cure serious wounds* spells, a *wand of magic missiles* (CL 5, 23 charges), two *potions of cat's grace* and a lacquered box inlaid with precious stones (600 gp) containing a plain copper ring (actually a *ring of sustenance*).

115: The King's Room

You discover a vast cave, filled with uncounted, glittering treasures surrounding dozens of fiery pits all around the cave. Amidst this opulence there are several luxurious cushions and pillows, enough to accommodate dozens of people – or a giant. Two female red-skinned giants, their muscular and squat bodies covered with flimsy, sparse clothing, sit up when you enter the chamber, their drowsy countenances slowly twisting into annoyed grimaces...

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This is Maladrev's treasure room, containing the plunder and tribute of his band's few years of activity. Its location is kept a secret from most of the band, though they all know their treasure is somewhere in the caves. So far, only Maladrev, Fassim Firefists (see **J11**) and the concubines of Maladrev, who lodge here, know the treasure's location.

Creatures (EL 12)

There is a 25% chance of finding Maladrev himself (see **J13**) in this chamber, resting, counting his treasure or having fun with his concubines.

Maladrev's concubines, two fire giant females, live with him in this room. They are not armed or trained for combat but are still quite dangerous opponents.

Maladrev's Concubines (2 fire giants): hp 142 each; use the fire giant statistics found in the corresponding section under 'Giant' in chapter One of the *MM*, except that Maladrev's concubines carry no weapons or throwing boulders, having only slam attacks.

Treasure

The treasure littering the room includes 6,230 gold pieces and 8,011 silver pieces distributed among five large locked coffers (Open Lock DC 25) and also scattered around the floor. The first coffer also includes an opal-studded golden crown (worth 3,500 gp) and a golden bracelet (750 gp); the third coffer also contains a solid ruby statuette (worth 5,550 gp) and a small locked metal case (Open Lock DC 30) inside which there are 182 platinum pieces; the fourth coffer also includes a valuable crystal necklace (worth 550 gp), a silvered sceptre (worth 375 gp) and a leather bag containing 1 fire opal (1,100 gp), 1 ruby (1,500 gp) and two pearls (250 gp each) (70 gp); finally, the fifth coffer has a hidden compartment inside, requiring a Search check (DC 30) to find. Inside this compartment there is an old Athan artefact, which the fire giants scavenged from nearby ruins; it appears as a golden headband or circlet, with a rhomboid diamond on the brow and the words *light slays the dark gods* written inside in Draconic. The artefact works as a *major circlet of blasting* in all respects. There are also five zircon gems (worth 70 gp each) and four *potions of cure moderate wounds* buried among the gold scattered outside the coffers.

J1b: The Great Pit

You reach the edge of a pit, just in the middle of a searing hot area of volcanic rock and a freezing hewn stone tunnel filled with hoarfrost. A great wind howls along the pit, as if it was the maw of a great beast.

This pit in the middle of the fire and frost giant lairs is the prize of their generations-long feud, leading to the darkest levels below Mount Moru and to an ancient legend

regarding both fire and frost giants. For full details on this legend and the reason the giants fight over it, read the complete story in page 56 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

This is the only place in the whole of **Area J** where the temperature is normal; apply neither of the special rules regarding **Area J's** special climate (page 65). Here (and only here), the temperature extremes cancel each other out, causing the weather in the area to be quite bearable.

Descending the great pit requires five to six hours of vertical descent and a successful Climb check (DC 25). The pit leads directly to **Area K1** at the Dark Warrens.

Area K: The Dark Warrens

These are underground caves, inhabited by blind dark things that have never known the light of day; the only organised life here is a tribe of particularly dark and evil stone giants, who retreated far deeper than usual for their race's standards. Their goals, which are those of their leader, the sinister Tawunn Tamestone, remain a mystery. These stone giants seem to hold the key to the feud between the fire and frost giants at **Area J**; details are related in the book known as *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 56.

Other than climbing the impossible chasms leading up from the Drow Spire (**Area L**), the only access to the Dark Warrens is via the Great Pit at **J1b** in the Giant Caves.

K1: Entrance Cave

This cave feels like being in the grip of a black-gloved claw. The air feels thick here, making your head throb after only a few seconds.

This is an incredibly dark and stifling cave. Due to its depth and the presence of certain natural gases in the area, the air is all but unbreathable here, constituting an insidious and deadly trap for visitors.

Traps (EL 11)

The lack of air and noxious gases here should be treated as a natural trap. Detecting the deadly air requires a Knowledge (dungeoneering) check (DC 25), Survival check (DC 30) or Spot check (DC 30).

Unbreathable Cave: CR 11; natural trap; location trigger; automatic reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in the cave); never miss; onset delay (1 round); deadly air (DC 25 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 Con/ 2d6 Con); no Search check or Disable Device check possible; no market price.

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THE DARK WARBENS AS A DUNGEON

All of the dark warrens are natural caves, with five inch thick walls, hardness 8, 900 hp per 10' x 10' section and a Break DC of 65.

The Dark Warrens are exactly that... dark. Practically no light sources, natural or otherwise, exist in the area.

The Travelling Seal

Area K is affected by the Travelling Seal (see page 64), the curse placed by the gods on the dungeons beneath Mount Moru. No dimensional travel is possible into, inside or out of this area; treat as a permanent *dimensional lock* effect (CL 50) in the entire level.

K2: Guard Post

There are assorted rocks against the stone wall here, arranged into what could vaguely appear as furniture, including a bed, a table and chairs. Suddenly the stones seem to move...

Stone giants use this area as a guard post against possible invasion. They have gathered and piled rocks in such a fashion that they serve as seating.

Creatures (EL 12)

Two stone giant guards stand watch here at all times. If they face an intruder force, their reaction depends on the intruders' apparent might: if they seem too strong to be overwhelmed, the stone giants shout an alarm and flee, returning with reinforcements from **K3** or **K4** after one minute. If they feel they are on at least equal terms with the intruders, the giants demand an identification and attempt to bring the invaders in to meet their chiefs at **K3** or **K6**.

Stone giant guards (2 Stone Giant Ftr2): CR 10; Large giant; HD 14d8+56 plus 2d10+8; hp 138; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +12; Grp +26; Atk +21 melee (3d6+15/x3, greataxe) or +21 melee (1d4+10, slam) or +16 ranged (2d8+15, boulder); Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (3d8+15/x3, greataxe) or +21 melee (1d4+10, 2 slams) or +16 ranged (2d8+15, boulder); Space /Reach 10 ft./ 10 ft.; SA rock throwing; SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, rock catching; AL NE; SV Fort +16, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 30, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Hide +9 (+17 in rocky terrain), Jump +14, Spot +11; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Far Shot, Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (thrown boulder).

The special abilities of these giants are detailed under 'Giant' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE DARK WARBENS

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area K**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of having a hostile encounter; depending on the area the characters are currently in. In areas **K1-K7**, the characters encounter 1d4+1 stone giants; in areas **K8-K11** the encounter is with 1d6+6 cloakers. The statistics of both monsters are given in Chapter One of the *MM*, sections 'Giant' and 'Cloaker', respectively. Areas **K12-K14** have no random encounters.

Possessions: Large greataxe, Large hide armour, 13 throwing boulders.

Treasure

Each of these giant guards carries a bag with moss-spiced dry meat equal to 10 days of trail rations, a full set of cooking and eating implements made of stone, a stone tinderbox with flint and steel, a leather bag containing 1,900 gold pieces and 6 pieces of rock crystal (80 gp each), a crude stone comb, a dusty animal hide bedroll, a stone knife, a set of stone dice, two *potions of cure moderate wounds* and three *potions of fire resistance*.

K3: The Forge

There is a fire pit in the floor of this cave, too well finished to be natural and too rough to be engineered. Some stone tools, suspiciously reminiscent of a hammer, callipers and anvil, rest in a corner. The smoke from the pit escapes through some conveniently placed cracks on the ceiling.

This cave serves as the stone giants' forge, where they practice and keep the secret craft of metalworking, taught to them by Tawunn Tamestone and his dark cult. The giants do not have anything besides a primitive furnace, adapted from a natural fire pit, and some stone-carved tools; however, they all have learned to make metal tools, which sets them apart from most of their brethren.

The fire pit emanates light equal to that of a torch, dimly illuminating a 20-foot radius.

A tunnel leads to a **K2** area to the west and another leads to **K4** to the east.

Creatures (EL 12)

Moraeus Mortar-soul, the stone giant blacksmith, works in this chamber. He has orders to produce weapons for the other giants; he was also instructed to either slay or capture any intruders. Prisoners worthy of attention are to be taken to Tawunn Tamestone immediately. Moraeus

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always has the company and protection of two stone giants, part apprentices, part bodyguards, assigned specially to assist him in guarding and working the forge.

Moraeus Mortar-Soul (Male Stone Giant Bbn1): CR 10; Large giant; HD 14d8+84 plus 1d12+6; hp 159; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +11; Grp +25; Atk +20 melee (3d6+15/x3, greataxe) or +20 melee (1d4+10, slam) or +14 ranged (2d8+15, boulder); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (3d6+15/x3, greataxe) or +20 melee (1d4+10, 2 slams) or +14 ranged (2d8+15, boulder); Space /Reach 10 ft./ 10 ft.; SA rage 1/day, rock throwing; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, low-light vision, rock catching; AL NE; SV Fort +17, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 31, Dex 17, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +13, Hide +7 (+15 in rocky terrain), Jump +13, Listen +6, Spot +13; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot.

Possessions: Large greataxe, Large hide armour, thick leather apron, 2 *potions of fire resistance*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*.

Stone Giants (2): hp 119 each; see the corresponding section under ‘Giant’ in Chapter One of the *MM*, except they carry greataxes (3d6+12 damage) instead of greatclubs.

The special abilities of Moraeus and his assistants are detailed under ‘Giant’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.



Treasure

Neither Moraeus nor his aides bring their giant’s bags to the forge (they all live and sleep in **Area K4**), though they have the following stash in a corner, below some blacksmithing tools: 2,601 gold pieces, six pieces of rock crystal (worth 75 gp each) and a diamond (worth 2,800 gp), distributed between two large stone coffers.

K4: Throwing Range

There are many fairly big boulders scattered throughout the floor of this chamber. Two tunnels lead out of this cave, roughly opposite each other; there are several strange marks on the floor and walls near each of the tunnels.

The stone giants use this cave for their rock-throwing games. There are two exits, one on the southwest wall and one on the north; the floor and walls near each of these exits are full of lines and position marks, intended as rock-throwing targets or indicators of rock-catching team positions.

Creatures (EL 10+)

Unless they have been previously alerted or there is some emergency, there are usually 1d3+1 stone giants in this chamber, practicing their aim or playing against each other. If they meet intruders, they run to either **K3** or a nearby **K2** area to get reinforcements and return after 2d6 rounds to demand the intruders identify and present themselves to their chief, Tawunn Tamestone. If faced with hostility, they retaliate.

Stone Giants (1d3+1): hp 119 each; see the corresponding section under ‘Giant’ in Chapter One of the *MM*, except they carry greataxes (3d6+12 damage) instead of greatclubs.

Treasure

Stone giants do not bring their giant’s bags to the throwing range, though they still carry their greataxes and a reserve of 10 throwing boulders each.

KJ: Main Cave

A sudden increase in sounds and smells, as well as the stark contrast in temperature, indicates you just entered a heavily populated area.

At least two stone giant families, with their tools and their refuse, live in this large cave; this means the area is usually a bustle of activity, heat and the rumbling murmurs that make up the bulk of stone giant speech. There are at least 15 large fur beds all over the chamber, where the giants sleep close together. There are several holes in the ground near the cave walls, fenced out with piled stones – the stone giant use these as sanitation systems.

Creatures (EL 13+)

At any given time, this cave holds 1d4+5 adult stone giants of both genders, plus one or two non-combatants (children and otherwise). The reason there are so few children is related to the giant war in **Area J** and detailed in page 60 of *Tales of Mount Moru*. They rise up in curiosity when faced with intruders, though they do not attack outright unless they or their families are threatened.

Stone Giants (1d4+5): hp 119 each; see the corresponding section under 'Giant' in Chapter One of the *MM*, substituting greatclubs for greataxes (3d6+12 damage).

Treasure

There are as many giants' bags as there are adult giants in this cave. Each of these bags contains grooming, cooking and eating implements made of stone, plus a large tinderbox, 12 throwing boulders and a leather pouch containing about 500 gold pieces, three pieces of rock crystal (worth 75 gp each) and 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*.

Kb: Stone Altar

This tall, surprisingly cool cave is bare save for a pile of rocks on the far wall. Their crude arrangement seems to have a ceremonial significance of some sort. A wide, dark pit opens abruptly to the left, occupying roughly one-third of the chamber area.

This room serves as the stone giants' altar, where they celebrate the rites of the dark religion instated by Tawunn Tamestone. More information about this cult is relayed on page 62 of *Tales of Mount Moru*. The altar is arranged out of piled rocks, set against the northeast wall. Closer analysis of the altar indicates the symbol of the cult, the gaping cave of darkness, carved on the wall above, and a set of writing stone slabs with some charcoal to write on them. There is also a great pit (**K12**) taking up most of the chamber's west half; Tawunn keeps a great monster there, intended as a means for executing prisoners and performing ritual sacrifices.

Creatures (EL 13)

Tawunn Tamestone, the dark priest that has taken over the storm giant clan, is usually found here, although he has quarters among the other giants at **K5**. For more details about Tawunn, his tactics, his story and his goals, read the section dedicated to him on page 57 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Tawunn Tamestone, the Stone Giant Priest: hp 161; see *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

In addition to his possessions (detailed on page 114 of *Tales of Mount Moru*), Tawunn has a stash buried under the

altar rocks, a combination of ritual offerings and personal wealth. Finding this stash below the stones requires a successful Search check (DC 30). Once the treasure is located, reaching it requires a successful Strength check (DC 28) to remove the stones that bury it; a character may take 20 in this check. The treasure includes 4,441 gold pieces, 9 pieces of rock crystal (worth 85 gp each) and a diamond (worth 2,300 gp) inside a large, locked stone coffer (Open Lock DC 30). Besides this cache, three of the writing stone slabs above the altar have been inscribed with arcane rituals; treat them as three *stone shape* scrolls (CL 5).

K7: Aeathon the Mad

You reach a big cave, maybe 50 feet across or more, whose floor is several feet lower than the entrance level. All sounds are magnified by the echo in this chamber, including your own steps and a rumbling, low breathing sounds coming from somewhere to the left... it is as if the darkness itself was slowly breathing in and out...

This empty, derelict cave is beyond the limits of the stone giants' territory and no stone giant ever approaches it – except for Tawunn Tamestone himself. This cave marks the limit between the stone giant lair and the true realm of darkness taking up the remainder of **Area K**.

Creatures (EL 13)

The cave has only one occupant – Aeathon the Mad, a storm giant that entered realms beyond mortal ken and, apparently, faced strange creatures – or perhaps even a god. These encounters scarred Aeathon's psyche forever, leaving him an insane husk of his previous greatness. Aeathon lashes out madly against most living things, with a few notable exceptions such as Tawunn Tamestone himself, who often visits the mad giant for unknown purposes. The story of Aeathon the Mad can be found in page 63 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Aeathon the Mad (Storm Giant): hp 199; see the corresponding section under 'Giant' in chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

In addition to his listed possessions, Aeathon keeps his old giant's bag, containing mostly broken, useless and mouldy items, including a rusty stringless lyre he still mock-plays to himself. However, 1,310 gold pieces can still be found among these items, plus Aeathon still keeps his most valuable possession – a piece of parchment where he wrote the arcane curse that drove him insane. On paper, the words do not hold the same power they had when uttered by the force of chaos that Aeathon faced originally; however, they still have the power to shatter the minds of those listening to them, at least temporarily (treat the parchment as a *scroll of confusion*).

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K8: Descent into Darkness

You reach the edge of a deep, dark chasm. There seems to be no easy way to descend.

The inner walls of this chasm are slanted inward from the precipice, so they are extremely hard to climb; in addition, they are quite slippery from moss and ancient humidity. Climbing up or down this chasm requires a successful Climb check (DC 34). The chasm is more than 500 feet deep. Any creature falling from such a height takes 20d6 points of damage from the fall, plus 6d6 points of damage from the spiky stones littering the lower level. A party of adventurers that successfully descends this chasm by non-magical means should be rewarded as if they had defeated a CR 12 trap.

The upper access to this chasm comes from Aeathon's cave at **K7**; its lower access leads to the moaning cave at **K9**.

K9: The Moaning Cave

This cave is pitch-black, probably the darkest you have seen thus far. A strange wind blows across the cave, almost like a moaning...

This is one of two caves forming a larger grotto. It has several rock formations caused by ages-old dampness and two exits; one leads east to the descent at **K8**, the other leads south to the abyss at **K11**. A strange, dark wind seems to blow through the area; a successful Survival check (DC 30) or Spellcraft check (DC 30) recognises this wind is not a natural occurrence. In fact, the wind is one of the unnatural side effects of the nearby Darkdelving at **K13**. This wind is part of the reason why these are called the 'moaning caves'; the other is the unnatural, maddening sound made by the creatures living here.

Creatures (Average EL 11)

Strange creatures from deepest shadow, apparently made of cloaks of pure darkness, infest these caves; every time living creatures enter the area, they are likely to run into them. The dark beings wait hidden in the shadows until they see an opportunity; then they rush their targets, focused on hunting and killing.

Cloakers (1d6+6): hp 45 each; see 'Cloaker' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

This is only one group of creatures, though many more prowl the area constantly. Assume a new group of 1d6+6 cloak creatures appears every time a living creature enters the cave.

K10: Living Rocks

Stalagmites and other rock formations are quite high in this cave, some of them being in fact taller than a man.

The unnatural wind you perceived before howls fiercely when crossing this area.

This is the other half of the great cave that also contains area **K9**. This section stands out for having extremely tall rock formations, which hide great dangers for unaware explorers...

Creatures (EL 14)

Two of the stalactites are actually living creatures, complete with eyes and a gaping maw. They attack any living thing that enters their cave.

Ropers (2): hp 85 each; see 'Roper' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

K11: Darkdelving Descent

You come to yet another great chasm, this one deeper and darker than any you have seen previously. Unnaturally thick, black mist seems to actually come up from the abyss...

As is the case with the abyss at **K8**, the inner walls of this chasm are slanted inward and slippery; Climbing up or down this chasm requires a successful Climb check (DC 34). The chasm is more than 500 feet deep; falling from such a height deals 20d6 points of damage from the fall, plus 6d6 points of damage from the spiky stones littering the lower level. In addition, for every round a character spends climbing the chasm, he must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 25) or take 1 point of damage due to the noxious fumes emanating from the area. As soon as a character reaches the ground of this cave, and as long as he remains on it, the damage increases to 1d6 per round on a failed save. Any effect granting protection, resistance or immunity against poison is also effective against this damage. A party of adventurers that leaves **Area K11** alive should be rewarded as if they had defeated a CR 13 trap.

The upper access to this chasm leads from the cave at **K9**; the cave it leads to connects with both the lower exit (from **K14** to **Area L**) and the Darkdelving (**K13**).

K12: The Worm

You reach the edge of a shallow, foul-smelling pit on the same room as the rock altar you saw before. Something moves below, something so big it seems the entire pit shifts and stirs...

Tawunn Tamestone (**K6**) uses this pit to hold his greatest weapon against the stone giant he commands – the weapon of fear. The monster living in the pit has punished so many stone giants into oblivion it may be argued Tamestone is more feared for what he keeps in the pit rather than his own merits.

The pit is 100 feet deep; falling or being tossed in deals 10d6 points of damage. There are several holes and lesser tunnels, 5-6 feet wide each, all over the walls and floor of the pit. The bottom is splattered with gooey matter, though there are no organic remains to be seen, whether flesh or bones.

Creatures (EL 12)

The pit is one of many entrances to the underground lair of an oversized, 80 foot long carnivorous worm, capable of gulping down a stone giant in a single bite. This particular exit would have no special appeal to the worm, except that it receives a lot of food from here. It sees any living creature entering its tunnels simply as another food offering.

Purple Worm: hp 200; see ‘Purple Worm’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

K13: The Darkdelving

You reach a pit so dark and evil you feel you have been blinded, just by looking at it. The pit has also a dizzying effect; after gazing at it everything seems to spin around in a dark spire of madness...

This is the Darkdelving, a truly bottomless abyss; its depths lead, through dark mists and unfathomable depths, into a region of Hell. Descending the abyss by non-magical – or even magical – means is too hard, even for experienced adventurers. The walls are treacherously uneven, requiring a Climb check (DC 34) every round. Also, any character descending the Darkdelving must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 35) each round or suffer 1d6 points of damage from the Darkdelving’s evil fumes. The character suffers 1 point of damage, even if the save succeeds. Any effect granting protection, resistance or immunity against poison is also effective against this damage. The Darkdelving is endless in the Material Plane; the only way to ever reach its bottom is via a dimensional travel effect such as *plane shift* spell, though the Travelling Seal (see page 64) prevents virtually all kinds of such travel. In the unlikely event a living creature managed to reach the Darkdelving’s bottom by any means, it leads to the hellish caves of the Wyrms-Worm below the City of Hellfast (**Area P15**). Both Hellfast and the caves below it are detailed in *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 82.

Tawunn Tamestone (**K6**) and his dark cult (see page 62 of *Tales of Mount Moru*) worship both the Darkdelving itself and the hellish creature spawned by it.

Creatures (EL 14)

The Darkdelving is home to an utterly evil, terrible monster from the depths, hellspawned by the Wyrms-Worm of the underworld (see **Area P15**). The creature, like a living blanket of darkness given form, lashes out with unnatural fury and sadistic delight against any living creature coming near its pit.

Nightwing: hp 144; see the corresponding section under ‘Nightshade’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

If the dark creature is destroyed (not merely routed or disabled), its body dissipates into nothingness, leaving behind a dark, slender stick apparently made of shadow. This stick stores the essence of the dead creature as it overturned upon death; a knowledgeable character wielding the stick may use it to damage evil creatures, just as the creature had the power to hurt the spirits of good. Treat the stick as a *wand of holy smite* (CL 8) with 50 charges.

K14: Hidden Exit

At first sight, no special feature or description of any kind indicates there is anything particular about this area. However, there is a hidden natural crevice in the wall, undetected by the denizens of either of the areas it connects. Finding the crevice requires a successful Search check (DC 30); fitting through it requires a successful Escape Artist check (DC 20 for a Medium creature, 15 for a Small creature). Once found and entered, the crevice leads steadily upward through roughly ten miles of narrow, almost impassable underground passages, finally opening up at **L1** in the Drow Spire.

Area I: The Drow Spire

A great fortress, constructed by dark elves over some lost Athan ruins, occupies most of this massive cave. The dark elves did not care about the ruins, their builders or their history; they simply built over them, destroying everything that did not satisfy their needs. Therefore, they are largely ignorant of the ancient site’s original purpose or history. The dark elves inhabiting this fortress are the *de facto* rulers of the gnomish city of Ogginnogg, often demanding tribute and slaves from it. Recently, the uprising of the Dwergard queen (**Area M**) has compromised the dark elves’ position of power in the area; a full account of this conflict can be found on page 67 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

House Unh Aneghr, the dark elf clan that has overtaken the ruins is a very strong family, almost all of them warriors of heroic proportions, splintered from the mighty House Narrishtah. Their clan symbol, a rampant spider on a black and purple background, can be seen everywhere throughout the area.

These caves are actually many miles above **Area K**, being almost level with **Area J** only a few miles below the ground; however, the area may only be reached via the underground city of Ogginnogg (described at length in both *The Dragon Stone*, page 50, and *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 70) or through the secret passage leading up from **K14**.

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THE DROW SPIRE AS A DUNGEON

The Drow Spire is divided into two dungeons. Areas **L1-L8** and **L10** are an ancient, well-built fortress, constructed by drow over ancient Athan ruins; the walls here have a thickness of one foot, hardness 8, 90 hit points per square and a Break DC of 35. Most chambers in the area also have stone doors, with a thickness of 4 inches, hardness 8, 60 hit points and a Break DC of 28. Those doors that are locked have an Open Lock DC of 30. The doors, walls and floor of this area are carved with alien and obscene designs; ceilings are domed and narrow. Recognising this masonry as elven work requires a successful Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check (DC 20); noticing it was built over Athan ruins requires another Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check (DC 30).

Conversely, areas **L9** and **L11-L16** are natural, rough caves without any light source or masonry work. The walls here are five feet thick, with hardness 8, 900 hit points per square and a Break DC of 65. There are no doors of any kind in these areas.

Areas **L1-L8** and **L10** receive their illumination from glowing green spheres of light, mounted on standing candelabra at 30-foot intervals; rooms with an area smaller than 30 feet always have at least one of these spheres illuminating it. The spheres contain a rare phosphorescent fungus, which dark elves harvest for illumination. To successfully collect the fungus without killing it requires a Survival check (DC 25) or Knowledge (nature) check (DC 25). If the check fails, the fungus dies and loses its light when scraped away. Areas **L9** and **L11-L16** have no light sources of any kind.

The Travelling Seal

Area **L** is affected by the Travelling Seal (see page 64), the curse placed by the gods on the dungeons

beneath Mount Moru. No dimensional travel is possible into, inside or out of this area; treat as a permanent *dimensional lock* effect (CL 50) in the entire level.

Random Encounters in the Drow Spire

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring Area **L**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, they have a 10% chance of having an encounter. If the encounter happens in or near Areas **L12-L16**, it is a barbaric dark elf hunting party as the one described in Area **L15**. If the encounter happens in or near Areas **L1-L11**, choose or randomly determine an encounter from the following table:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREAS L1-L11

D%	Encounter
01-25	1 slave ¹
26-50	Dark elf guards ²
51-70	1d2+1 slaves ¹
71-80	Dark elf guards ² +1d2 slaves ¹
81-95	Female squad ³
96-00	The Task Force ⁴

¹1st level svirfneblin warrior, as detailed under 'Gnome' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

²Use a dark elf guard team as the one described for **L2** areas.

³Use a dark elf female squad as the one described for **L6** areas.

⁴The characters encounter the Unh Aneghr Task Force, whose members and statistics are described in **L4**.

Common Dark Elf Traits

Except where otherwise noted, all of the dark elves have the drow traits listed under 'Elf' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

L1: Spire Top

You reach a circular stone room, undoubtedly built by intelligent hands, whose walls and floor are full of strange, unsettling carvings. The walls taper far upward to a domed ceiling. The entire chamber is illuminated by the light of three greenish orbs, mounted on the walls. Resting against a wall there is a horrid idol of black stone, representing a monstrous spider-like being with a woman's breasts and a cruel expression. An archway on the opposite wall, surrounded by disturbing arcane-looking symbols, leads to a flight of descending stairs that seem to be the only exit from this chamber.

This is the topmost room of the drow spire, a carved stone room dedicated to the dark elves' Spider-Goddess, the

Dark Mother. The room is taboo to most dark elves; only the race's priestesses are allowed to come in here to pray and meditate. The altar to the Dark Mother is located against the wall at **L1a**. Unknown even to the dark elves, behind this altar there is a natural crack leading down to the very mouth of Hell: the infernal pit overseeing the Darkdelving at Area **K14**. A successful Search check (DC 35) reveals the passage behind the idol; once located, the passage may be used to access Area **K14** after a 10 mile descent through a series of increasingly narrow, stifling and unwholesome tunnels. A character reaching Area **L1** via this tunnel needs no Search check to find the entrance, though he must succeed on a Strength check (DC 15) to enter the chamber, since the Dark Mother's idol must be moved aside.

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Traps (EL 12)

The symbols on the southeast archway mark a trap left by the dark elf priestess, intended to stop any males from entering the chamber. As soon as a living male creature crosses the archway, he triggers the trap. The *alarm* effect alerts high priestess K'lbana of Unh Aneghr (**Area L10**), who immediately sends a female squad (see **L6**) to investigate. The squad takes 1d3+1 minutes to arrive.

Male Barrier Trap: CR 12 (actually two simultaneous CR 10 traps); magic device; location trigger (*alarm*); female creatures do not activate the trap; automatic reset; multiple traps (both traps activate simultaneously); spell effect (*crushing hand*, 17th level wizard, grapple bonus +37, 2d6+12 lethal damage per round of successful grappling); 'The Dark Mother's crushing hand', appears as a 10-foot dark claw, each trap creates a separate hand; Search DC 34 (each trap requires a separate Search check); Disable Device DC 34 (each trap requires a separate Disable Device check). *Cost:* 76,500 gp (for each trap), 6,120 XP (for each trap).

12: Common Room

You come across some dark elves, who immediately stand up to face you, avoiding the stone benches, tables and other furniture in their way.

These areas are where most dark elves live and pass the time. They are well furnished, with several extravagant yet uncomfortable beds, a very small armoire, some dark stone chairs, a table and a separate sanitary section. In all, these rooms are a mix of recreation area, living quarters and guard barracks.

Creatures (EL 11+)

These rooms always contain 1d4+1 dark elf elite guards; if four or more are found, one of them is a dark elf warrior-nun (use the warrior-nun statistics presented in **L6**), assigned to instruct and command the others. They attack any intruder without hesitation or mercy.

Dark Elf Elite Guards (Male Drow Elf Ftr6/Wiz2): CR 9 each; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 6d10 plus 2d4; hp 38; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d6+5/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +11 ranged (1d4+2/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+5/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +11/+6 ranged (1d4+2/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poison, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 19; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4 (+6 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 14, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6 (+10 when casting defensively), Hide +3, Intimidate +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Search +5, Spot +3; Combat Casting, Dodge,

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (hand crossbow), Weapon Specialisation (rapier).

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, drow elite rapier (treat as +1 rapier), drow elite mail (treat as mithral chain shirt), masterwork heavy steel shield, case with 8 normal crossbow bolts and two poisoned crossbow bolts, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Spells Prepared (4/3; save DC 11 + spell level; spell failure chance 10% from mithral chain shirt plus 15% from masterwork heavy steel shield): 0th—*daze, flare, mage hand* (2); 1st—*magic missile* (2), *sleep*.

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, sleep*.

Treasure

In addition to their possessions, each of the dark elves carries 50+1d6 platinum pieces and 1d2 gems (white or black opals) worth 750 gp each.

13: Pain Class

There are several drow soldiers torturing and fighting each other in this circular stone arena; apparently they are having a training session. You have little time to look at the pictures and ornaments on the walls but there seems to be a mix of heraldic symbols, diagrams of the human body and targeting dummies...

These rooms are used for military instruction, where lesser dark elf guards study under the tutelage of choice officers. There are two such instruction rooms in **Area L**; one at the fortress entrance, where it doubles as a guard post and reception hall (with such receptions as the dark elf foot soldiers are able to give) and another, smaller one, near the spire top.

In addition to several depictions of the House Unh Aneghr's family banner (a rampant spider on a black and purple background), the walls of both rooms are filled with diagrams and very lifelike training dummies, some of them actually made of dead prisoners, mostly other dark elves but also deep dwarves or gnomes.

Creatures (EL 14+)

There are always at least 1d4+6 dark elf soldiers and one instructor training here, as well as 1d4 slaves (1st level svirfneblin warriors, see 'Gnome' in Chapter One of the *MM*) that are used as living sparring dummies. The class consists of various exercises requiring various levels of skill at both inflicting pain and enduring it; most dark elf trainees are either convulsing in agony or revelling in torture. Their gnome slaves are used as little more than things, tools used to teach torture; currently most of the

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slaves have passed out with pain. The soldiers and their instructors react violently to the presence of intruders, rushing to the attack with any hesitation despite their wounds.

Dark Elf Guards (1d4+6, Drow Ftr4/Wiz1): CR 6 each; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 4d10 plus 1d4; hp 24; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d6+3/18-20, rapier) or +8 ranged (1d4/19-20, hand crossbow); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+3/18-20, rapier) or +8 ranged (1d4/19-20, hand crossbow); SA poison, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 16; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2 (+4 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 13, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +3 (+7 when casting defensively), Hide +2, Intimidate +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +2, Search +4, Spot +3; Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (rapier).

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, masterwork rapier, masterwork chain shirt, masterwork light shield, case with 9 normal crossbow bolts and one poisoned crossbow bolts.

Spells Prepared (3/2; save DC 11 + spell level; spell failure chance 20% from masterwork chain shirt plus 5% from masterwork light steel shield): 0th—*daze, mage hand* (2); 1st—*magic missile* (2).

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, sleep.*

Dark Elf Officer (Drow Ftr8/Wiz3): CR 12; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 8d10 plus 3d4; hp 51; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d6+5/15-20, drow elite rapier) or +13 ranged (1d4+2/19-20, hand crossbow); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+5/15-20, drow elite rapier) or +13 ranged (1d4+2/19-20, hand crossbow); SA poison, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 22; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +4 (+6 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 14, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9 (+13 when casting defensively), Hide +3, Intimidate +12, Listen +6, Move Silently +3, Search +5, Spot +6; Alertness, Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (hand crossbow), Weapon Specialisation (rapier).

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, drow elite rapier (treat as +1 rapier), drow elite mail (treat as mithral chain shirt), masterwork heavy steel shield, case with 8 normal crossbow bolts and two poisoned crossbow bolts, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds.*

Spells Prepared (4/3/1; save DC 11 + spell level; spell failure chance 10% from mithral chain shirt plus 15% from masterwork heavy steel shield): 0th—*daze, flare, mage hand* (2); 1st—*magic missile* (2), *sleep*; 2nd—*summon swarm.*

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*cause fear, magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, shield, sleep*; 2nd—*alter self, summon swarm.*

The gnome slaves are cautiously friendly towards anyone that helps them against the dark elves; they can give a lot of information regarding the Drow Spire, as they know its configuration and inhabitants quite intimately.

L4: Task Force Post

Some young and lively dark elves are hanging out and chatting casually in this area. They would seem like frivolous noble youths, were it not for their clearly deadly equipment and combat attire.

A few years ago, Matron K'lbana (Area L10) had the idea of training a special dark elf team emulating the configuration and tactics of the most successful and effective task force in the known world – surfacer adventuring teams. Therefore, she chose four relatively young, high-born dark elves from both genders and organised them in a mixed team, each member featuring a unique set of skills that helped the function of the other three. All of these tactics – four members, mixed genders, different skills – were fairly unknown in dark elf strike teams, led by their own rigid caste system; however, surfacer teams with such composition have been known to topple entire dark elf empires with relatively little effort. Therefore, the ruling circle of house Unh Aneghr decided to create a specialised team these characteristics, known only as the ‘task force’. If, after ten years (a relatively short timeframe by dark elf standards), the team provides good results and effectiveness, the Unh Aneghr plan to train many more.

Creatures (EL 13)

The Task force constantly roams the entire dungeon area; areas marked L4 are just their favourite hangouts. There is always a 30% chance of encountering the dark elf task force in either of the areas labelled L4. However, they are immediately sent against any intruders that have proven a threat to the clan, particularly if the intruders seem to be a ‘surfacers’ strike team. When facing any threat, the Task Force zealously rushes to meet any threat or intrusion, all of its members eager to prove their worthiness to their

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superiors. They have fun as they fight, constantly mocking their enemies and flaunting their own skills.

Ali'yith, Task Force Leader (Female Drow Elf Ftr8): CR 9; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 8d10+8; hp 52; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d6+6/15-20, drow elite rapier) or +13 melee (1d6+4/19-20, drow elite short sword) or +13 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+6/15-20, drow elite rapier) and +11/+6 melee (1d6+2/19-20, drow elite short sword) or +11 and +11 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poison, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 19; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3 (+5 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 16, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +7, Listen +6, Search +6, Spot +6, Tumble +7; Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (rapier).

Possessions: 2 masterwork hand crossbows, drow elite rapier (treat as +1 rapier), drow elite short sword (treat as +1 short sword), drow elite mail (treat as mithral chain shirt), ring of protection +1, case with 16 normal crossbow bolts and four poisoned crossbow bolts, 3 potions of cure moderate wounds, potion of resist acid 30.

Tar'essa, Task Force Priestess (Female Drow Elf Clr8): CR 9; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 8d8+8; hp 44; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +6; Atk +8 melee (1d6+1/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +11 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+1/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +11/+11 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poison, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 19; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +9 (+11 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9 (+13 when casting defensively), Heal +14, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +8, Search +7, Spot +8; Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, drow elite rapier (treat as +1 rapier), drow elite mail (treat as mithral chain shirt), case with 8 normal crossbow bolts and two poisoned crossbow bolts, five potions of cure moderate wounds, scroll of lesser planar ally, scroll with three summon monster IV spells.

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0th—detect magic, guidance (2), resistance

(2), virtue; 1st—bane, bless, cure light wounds (2), disguise self*, shield of faith; 2nd—bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, hold person, invisibility*, silence; 3rd—contagion*, cure serious wounds (2), dispel magic (2); 4th—confusion*, cure critical wounds, lesser planar ally.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Destruction (smite power 1/day, +4 attack/+8 damage), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise and Hide are class skills).

Kee'lash, Task Force Scout (Male Drow Elf Rog8): CR 9; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 8d6; hp 28; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d6+3/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +11 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d6+3/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +11/+6 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poison, sneak attack +4d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, evasion, improved uncanny dodge, light blindness, SR 19, trap sense +2; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +10 (+12 vs. traps), Will +2 (+4 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 14, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +17, Bluff +11, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +14, Disguise +0 (+2 when acting in character), Hide +15, Intimidate +2, Jump +4, Listen +13, Move Silently +15, Open Lock +15, Search +16, Spot +13, Tumble +15, Use Magic Device +11; Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, drow elite rapier (treat as +1 rapier), drow elite mail (treat as mithral chain shirt), case with 8 normal crossbow bolts and two poisoned crossbow bolts, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, 2 potions of invisibility, potion of haste, wand of invisibility (22 charges).

L'elnor, Task Force Sage (Male Drow Elf Wiz8): CR 9; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 8d4+3; hp 23; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +8 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +8 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poison, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 19; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +8 (+10 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11 (+15 when casting defensively), Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Listen +8, Search +9, Spellcraft +17, Spot +8, Survival +2 (+4 when following tracks or in underground environments); Combat Casting,

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Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Toughness.

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, drow elite rapier (treat as +1 rapier), ring of protection+1, case with 8 normal crossbow bolts and two poisoned crossbow bolts, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, scroll with 2 *dimension door* spells, scroll with 2 *summon monster IV* spells, 2 scrolls with 3 *cat's grace* spells each, *wand of magic missile* (CL 3) with 16 charges.

Spells Prepared (4/5/4/4/3; save DC 14 + spell level): 0th—*acid splash*, *daze*, *mage hand* (2); 1st—*magic missile* (2), *sleep*, *true strike* (2); 2nd—*blur*, *cat's grace* (2), *summon swarm*; 3rd—*haste* (2), *invisibility sphere*, *stinking cloud*; 4th—*black tentacles*, *dimension door*, *greater invisibility*.

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*burning hands*, *disguise self*, *identify*, *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *obscuring mist*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *sleep*, *true strike*; 2nd—*blur*, *cat's grace*, *summon swarm*, *web*; 3rd—*haste*, *invisibility sphere*, *stinking cloud*, *summon monster III*; 4th—*black tentacles*, *dimension door*, *greater invisibility*, *summon monster IV*.

L7: Empty Chamber

You reach a circular room, its walls and floor entirely covered with strange, obscene carvings. Two exits lead out of this chamber: an ascending staircase and an open passage. Some orbs of green light mounted on the wall illuminate the otherwise empty area.

These rooms are truly empty, with no features but the horrible carvings on the walls, much less detailed than they seem thanks to the dark elves' stonecarving mastery.

One of these rooms hides a secret door to the northeast (indicated on the map), leading into the secret treasure chamber at **Area L8**. Finding this masterfully concealed secret door requires a successful Search check (DC 35).

L6: Female Quarters

You enter a lavishly ornamented circular room, with well-finished masonry and fine – if sinister – tapestries. The Dark Mother's holy symbol and the Unh Aneghr clan shield are present in all the decorations. There are several ornate beds, two luxurious divans, an ample wardrobe and a curtained-off area in a corner.

The rooms labelled **L6** are dedicated to housing the female elite of the Unh Aneghr dark elves, the Dark Mother's warrior nuns. These chambers are well furnished, with four beds with spider silk blankets and curtains, silken reclining divans and plentiful decorations. The curtained-off areas are clean, discreet latrines. Besides serving to accommodate the female elite, the chambers function as

guardrooms; both **L6** areas are used as antechambers to a sacred place for the Unh Aneghr dark elves.

Doors leading into and out of these chambers are always locked (Open Lock DC 30).

Creatures (EL 13)

There are always four dark elf warrior-nuns in these rooms; they attack any intruder with unhesitating zeal.

Dark Elf Warrior-Nun (4 Female Drow Elves Ftr4/Clr4): CR 9 each; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 4d10 plus 4d8; hp 40 each; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d6+6/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +12 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+6/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +12/+7 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poison, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 19; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +7 (+9 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 15, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +3 (+7 when casting defensively), Hide +7, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +6, Search +4, Spot +6; Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Specialisation (rapier).

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, drow elite rapier (treat as +1 rapier), drow elite mail (treat as mithral chain shirt), masterwork heavy steel shield, case with 8 normal crossbow bolts and two poisoned crossbow bolts, holy symbol of the Spider Goddess, 4 *potions of cure serious wounds*.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1; save DC 12 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic*, *mending*, *resistance* (3); 1st—*disguise self**, *magic stone* (2), *obscuring mist*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*darkness*, *hold person* (2), *invisibility**.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Destruction (smite power 1/day, +4 attack/+4 damage), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise and Hide are class skills).

Treasures

Besides the priestesses' possessions, these chambers have fine ladies' wardrobes, made of spider silk and other exotic materials, worth a rough total of 2,000 gold pieces. The fine tapestries are worth another 1,800 gold pieces.

L5: The Spider-Goddess' Brood

The staircase ends in a stone archway, which opens directly in the middle of the wall of a great cylindrical stone chamber, which extends far away both upward

and downward from where you are standing. The walls of this chamber are completely enveloped in whitish cobwebs, among which you discern some occasional, jerky movements...

This chamber is where the dark elves keep the unnatural children of the Spider-Goddess at **L11**. It is a cylindrical stone chamber, 60 foot tall and 25 foot wide. The staircase entrance opens in the middle of the wall, 30 feet away from both the floor and the ceiling; a careless or unaware character must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 10) to avoid falling (3d6 points of falling damage). The webs covering the chamber lessen the impact somehow, allowing the falling creature another Reflex save (DC 20); if this second save is successful, the creature suffers only 1d6 points of nonlethal damage from the fall.

Creatures (EL 12)

The vile offspring of the Unh Aneghr's Spider-Goddess (**L11**), spawned from the mating of a colossal monstrous spider with the dragon Webwind (**L16**), inhabit this chamber. They are nine oversized spiders, with aberrant characteristics that mark each of them as more than a simple spider, even a monstrous one. They assume any living thing entering the chamber to be food and react accordingly.

Besides the spiders, there is a 35% chance of finding 1d2 gnome prisoners (1st level svirfneblin warriors, as described in the corresponding section under 'Gnome' in Chapter One of the *MM*), still alive, trapped among the webs. These gnomes are cautiously friendly towards anyone that helps them against the dark elves; they can give a lot of information regarding the Drow Spire, as they know its configuration and inhabitants quite intimately from their stint as slaves to the dark elves.

Spider-Goddess' Brood (9 Advanced Half-Dragon Large Monstrous Spiders): CR 6 each; Large dragon (augmented vermin); HD 7d10+14; hp 52 each; Init +3; Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +15; Atk +10 melee (1d8+6 plus poison, bite) or +10 melee (1d6+6, claw); Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+6 plus poison, bite) and +5 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA breath weapon, poison; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft., vermin traits; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 23, Dex 17, Con 14, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Hide +3, Jump +16, Spot +8.

Breath Weapon: 60-foot line of acid, 6d8 damage, Reflex save (DC 15) halves.

Poison: Injury, Fort DC 15, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Str.

As hunting spiders, the brood of the Spider-Goddess cannot use their webs in combat.

L8: Treasure Chamber

There is a small, circular stone room hidden behind this wall; as with the other, nearby chambers, there are strange carvings here, giving the impression the entire walls are inhabited by grotesque, formless monsters trapped in the stone. There are three large darkwood coffers in the room, surrounded by a scattering of leather bags, from which a lot of gold coins have spilled out all over the chamber. There is also a black cloak hanging from the far wall. The entire scene is illuminated by a phantasmal, hazy green glow.

This 25 foot wide circular stone chamber can only be accessed via a secret door on the southwest wall; finding this secret door from the outside requires a successful Search check (DC 35).

The chamber holds the loot gathered by the Unh Aneghr during years of depredation, raiding and tribute; most of the items are brought from the deep gnome city of Ogginnogg (detailed in *The Dragon Stone*, page 50). Two orbs of green phosphorescence illuminate the treasure, giving it an unnatural allure.

Traps (EL 13)

The secret door closes again automatically one minute after being opened. Every time the door closes, a hidden switch is triggered, activating a deadly magical trap inside the chamber. The switch is a tiny, spider-shaped carving, hidden among the wall bas-reliefs beside the entrance. If the switch is pressed/activated within one minute of opening the secret door, the trap is not activated when the door closes. Finding the switch requires a successful Search check (DC 25). If the door is otherwise prevented from closing, the switch is not triggered and the trap does not activate. To stop the door from closing manually requires a successful Strength check (DC 40).

Death Runes Trap: CR 13; magic device; location trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); 19d8 points of damage (negative energy discharge, DC 23 Fortitude save halves, counts as CL 19 for purposes of spell resistance and the like); multiple targets (all creatures inside the room when the door closes); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34. *Cost:* 85,500 gp, 6,840 XP.

Treasure

The treasure includes 5,803 gold pieces and 300 platinum pieces distributed among three coffers and a dozen or so half-opened bags. The first coffer also has an assortment of gems among the coins, including six pieces of obsidian (15 gp each), one jasper gem (50 gp), 2 moonstones (75 gp each), three iolite gems (65 gp each), 5 polished jet stones

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(180 gp each), 2 clear white pearls (actually both are 1st level spell *pearls of power*), four deep blue aquamarines (550 gp each), a purple corundum stone (1,400 gp) and a black onyx ring, clearly of Athan manufacture, with the following inscription in Draconic: ‘Scare their Breath Away’. The ring works as a *ring of evasion*. All three coffers are closed but only the third one is locked (Open Lock DC 40, Break DC 35). Inside this third coffer, besides the gold, there is a one-foot long darkwood box, engraved with ancient symbols. The box is of Morudhain origin; allow a character familiar with Morudhain culture to recognise the facture automatically. This Morudhain box is also locked (Open Lock DC 30, Break DC 25); inside it there are a flask of wholesome-smelling grease (*oil of bless weapon*) and a silvered scroll case containing a scroll with 2 *daylight* spells. There is also a black felt cloak hanging from a wall; the clasp is shaped like a black weevil (actually a *golembane* scarab).

Lq: Exit Tunnel

You reach the mouth of a long cave tunnel, wider and deeper than the others in this area. Something catches your attention – the ground is paved. Then, it seems you caught the attention of something else...

These tunnels are direct passages into the enslaved gnome city of Ogginnogg, a half-hour walk away from **Area L**. They are crudely paved, so as to facilitate frequent traffic; they are still unlit.

Creatures (EL 13)

Each of these passages is constantly guarded by four dark elf elite guards; they attack anyone attempting to cross without authorisation, with not much preference about whether to take their prey dead or alive. The statistics of drow elite guards are given in **L2**.

L10: The Unh Aneghr Matron

You enter one of the most luxurious, extravagant chambers you have yet been to. Besides the now familiar, obscene carvings on the stone walls, there are several gaudy, garish pieces of furniture, such as an immense curtained bed, a black stone end table and a monstrous wardrobe. One of the doors has a crystal window, visibly leading to an open area. Various tapestries and decorations repeat the same symbol – a rampant spider on a black and purple background.

This room belongs to the dark elf clan leader and high priestess, Matron K’lbana of Unh Aneghr. It is a mix of working office, altar and bedroom, allowing the Matron to remain here indefinitely with little or no wants. There is a more-than-king-size bed with dark satin sheets, doubtlessly plundered from a surface raid; the gaudy

bed harness and curtains are black as well. A huge black wardrobe stands against the northwest wall. There is a body-size mirror mounted on the wall beside this wardrobe, and a curtained-off bathroom and changing room beside the mirror, containing a luxurious, grisly stone bathtub. Another curtained-off area on the room’s east corner contains the Dark Mother’s altar, where Matron K’lbana of Unh Aneghr prays every night. The Matron has even been known to sacrifice some of her slaves and even nightly visitors, when they displeased her, at this altar. There are a desk, a chair and an end table with two drawers to one side of the bed; all three pieces of furniture are made of strange black stone. The symbol of the Unh Aneghr clan is visible all over the room.

There is a grotesque black candelabrum hanging from the ceiling, each of its arms sporting an orb of green light such as the ones adorning the rest of the Drow Spire. Besides this candelabrum, there is a spider-shaped green light lamp on the desk besides the bed.

Both doors to this chamber are locked (Open Lock DC 40). The one leading south has a ten-inch wide crystal window, allowing a limited view of the curved balcony outside. In turn, the balcony offers a full view of the gladiatorial shows held at **L11**, 60 feet below. A hidden lever in the balcony’s rail (Search check DC 30) automatically opens and closes the pit of the Spider-Goddess at **L11**, allowing a character to control the trapdoor from here.

Creatures (EL 15)

Matron K’lbana of Unh Aneghr can be found here most of the time, be it resting, conducting some ritual or relaxing with her bodyguards. She attacks immediately and without hesitation, displaying the efficiency and ruthlessness of a true drow leader. Full information on K’lbana of Unh Aneghr and her strategies can be found on pages 68 and 115 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Matron K’lbana of Unh Aneghr: hp 86; see page 115 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Eight dark elf bodyguards, K’lbana’s slaves and lovers, stand guard in this balcony. They hear anything that happens inside the chamber and rush against any intruder unless specifically ordered otherwise.

Dark Elf Bodyguards (Male Drow Elf Ftr6): CR 7 each; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 6d10; hp 33; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d6+5/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +9 ranged (1d4+2/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+5/18-20, drow elite rapier) or +9/+4 ranged (1d4+2/19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA poison, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 17; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1 (+3 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 14, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13.

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Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Listen +3, Search +4, Spot +3; Dodge, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow)^B, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (hand crossbow), Weapon Specialisation (rapier).

Possessions: Masterwork hand crossbow, drow elite rapier (treat as +1 rapier), drow elite mail (treat as mithral chain shirt), masterwork heavy steel shield, case with 8 normal crossbow bolts and two poisoned crossbow bolts, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Treasure

In addition to her carried possession, K'lbana has a silver chain pendant from which hangs a key ring. This includes the keys to all the locked doors in **Area L**, including her locked drawers (see below). K'lbana's desk has thirty-one writing sheets, made of dried gnome skin, as well as an inkbottle and quill to write on them; on the desk there are also some of K'lbana's notes, detailed on page 68 of the *Tales of Mount Moru*. The two drawers of her end table are locked (Open Lock DC 40); one contains two doses of deathblade poison (described under 'Poison' in Chapter Eight of the *DMG*), an alchemist's lab and a curved dagger in a black leather sheath (treat as a *dagger of venom*); the other drawer has her personal diary (detailed in page 68 of *Tales of Mount Moru*). Finally, K'lbana's wardrobe contains nearly 10,000 gold pieces in fine ladies' dresses, plus an assortment of silver bracelets, rings, earrings and a jewelled tiara worth a total of 5,000 gold pieces.

11: The Spider-Goddess' Pit

This is a great roofless cave, whose unworked natural rock walls produce a stark contrast to the exquisite masonry of the rest of the building. Orbs of greenish light mounted high up on the walls illuminate the cave. The only exit from the cave is an iron portcullis; there is also an ornate balcony, peering from the opposite wall some 60 feet or more above the ground. Other than that, the big cave has no features but an immense iron grille on the ground, a few paces from the entrance.

This is the dark elves' gladiatorial pit, where slaves and drow soldiers are pitted against each other, and against the dark elf Spider-Goddess itself, for the amusement of the Unh Aneghr nobles. It is an 80 foot by 40 foot natural

cave, adapted for pit-fights with an iron portcullis to the west and some phosphorescent fungus lamps mounted on the walls. The Matron's balcony (**L10**) oversees the entire cave from a height of 70 feet on the cave's northeast wall. There is a 20 foot wide, 20 foot deep pit in the centre of the cave, covered by an iron grille trapdoor. This trapdoor can be sprung open or shut close automatically by pressing a lever on the balcony at the Matron's balcony (**L10**). The west portcullis can be opened or closed only by a lever on the passage wall (**L11a**)

Creatures (EL 13)

The dark elves' Spider-Goddess, which they believe is an avatar of the Dark Mother herself, is a Colossal arachnid, about 20 feet wide, whose legs can cover the entire cavern when extended and whose monstrous eyes are larger than a human head. It is said the creature was born of the unnatural union of the monstrous spider at the base of the mountain (**Area 14**) and the black dragon Webwind, and then grew to godlike size due to its wyrm blood. The truth is, the Unh Aneghr dark elves do worship the beast, and keep it in the pit below **Area L11**. All the Drow Spire's gladiatorial contests are held above the iron grille that closes the creature's cell, and sometimes the beast itself is allowed loose to test the mettle of those fighting at the arena. The outcome of such 'tests' is painfully obvious.

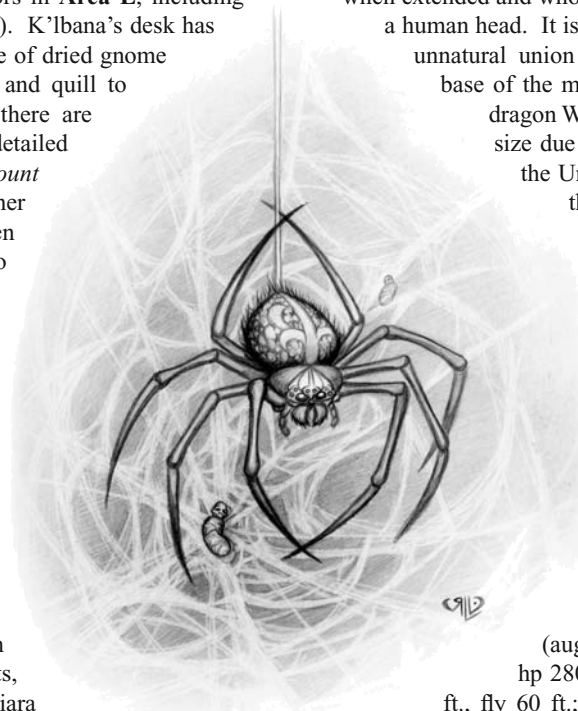
The Spider-Goddess, Avatar of the Dark Mother (Half-Dragon Colossal Monstrous Spider):

CR 13; Large dragon (augmented vermin); HD 33d10+99; hp 280; Init +2; Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 26, touch 4, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +24; Grp +54; Atk +30 melee (4d6+14 plus poison, bite) or +30 melee (3d6+14, claw); Full Atk +30 melee (4d6+14 plus poison, bite) and +25 melee (3d6+7, 2 claws); Space/Reach 40 ft./30 ft.; SA breath weapon, poison; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid, sleep and paralysis effects, low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft., vermin traits; AL CE; SV Fort +21, Ref +13, Will +11; Str 39, Dex 15, Con 16, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Climb +21, Hide +11, Jump +23, Spot +8.

Breath Weapon: 60-foot line of acid, 6d8 damage, Reflex save (DC 29) halves.

Poison: Injury, Fort DC 29, initial and secondary damage 2d8 Str.



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The Spider-Goddess is a hunting spider, so it cannot use its webs in combat.

Treasure/Traps (EL 13)

The greatest treasure of the Unh Aneghr dark elves is hidden in the Spider-Goddess' pit, where no one would dare enter and steal it. To find this treasure, the trapdoor must be opened, be it by the switch on L10 or manually, which requires a successful Disable Device check (DC 35) to deactivate the locking mechanism and then a successful Strength check (DC 25) to actually open it. Then, it requires descending to the Spider-Goddess' lair, 40 feet below ground level and, once there, succeeding on a Search check (DC 35). A successful check reveals a sliding panel on the pit floor, inside which there is a simple black metal box, adorned with the symbols of the Dark Mother. The box is locked (Open Lock DC 40) and trapped, causing a poisoned needle to spring out from one of the ornamental spiders as soon as the box is opened.

Poison Box Trap: CR 13; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; poison (black lotus extract, DC 20 Fortitude save resists, 3d6 Con/3d6 Con); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30; *Market Price:* 123,500 gp.

The box contains a single, spider-shaped dark steel brooch; it is the symbol of the Unh Aneghr clan, allegedly sent to their ancestors by the Dark Mother herself. If the brooch is stolen, any surviving members of the Unh Aneghr shall pursue the thief relentlessly, even to other planes if need be. When worn, the brooch works like a *scarab of protection*.

L12: R'thi's cave

This is a natural dead end; a narrow cul-de-sac hidden from the remaining caves. Something has turned this dark, small passage into a chaotic, untidy living quarters, with rocks serving as furniture. The strangest thing about this chamber is that the hides covering one of the stones and adorning one of the walls seem to belong to dark elves...

This is a narrow (about 10 feet wide) passage, whose dead-end has been adapted as a temporary campsite and spy post. The improvised chamber is furnished with an arrangement of rocks of various sizes, serving as a very crude chair, desk and mattress respectively. There are two dark elf skins, taken from slain dark elves, used as chamber ornaments; one laid over the stone furniture and another hanging from the wall as if it was some kind of sick trophy. The floor is littered with rubbish, from food remains to scattered wood and paper garbage to the bones and other remains of the slain dark elves to which the skins belong. The chamber is entirely unlit, just as if its occupant was blind.

Creatures (EL 12)

This cave has been claimed by R'thi, a derro special agent sent by the Dwerdard army (see **Area M**) to spy on their

dark elf rivals. As all derro, R'thi is a very deranged fellow; he has already taken two dark elf prisoners, flayed them alive and used their skins to adorn his cave. The other dark elves have so far attributed the deaths to the savage drow from areas L14 and L15; however, R'thi's careless sadism is sure to lead him to make a mistake that reveals his position sooner or later, unless he returns to Dwerdard soon with what he has learned, which is in fact quite a bit already. He remains in the area, however, no doubt expecting to add a couple more dark elf hides to his collections; he would of course be content with trophies obtained from intruders from other species...

R'thi (Derro Savant Spy, Rog5/Sor4): CR 12; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 5d6+5 plus 4d4+4; hp 53; Init +9; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +8; Grp +5; Atk +16 melee (1d4+2 plus 1 Con/19-20, murderer's knife) or +15 ranged (1d6/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d4+2 plus 1 Con/19-20, murderer's knife) or +15/+10 ranged (1d6/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); SA poison, sneak attack +4d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., madness, SR 15, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +13, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Bluff +13, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +2 (+4 acting in character), Escape Artist +5 (+7 involving ropes), Hide +26, Intimidate +4, Jump +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +23, Search +8, Spot +5, Survival -1 (+1 when following tracks and/or underground), Tumble +11, Use Rope +11; Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Possessions: Masterwork repeating light crossbow, murderer's knife (treat as a Small +1 wounding short sword), case with five normal crossbow bolts and five poisoned crossbow bolts (greenblood oil), *bracers of armour* +2, *ring of protection* +2.

Spell-like abilities: At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 12); 1/day—*daze* (DC 12), *sound burst* (DC 14); caster level 12th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

R'thi's other special abilities are detailed under 'Derro' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Spells Known (6/7/4; save DC 12 + spell level): 0th—*acid splash*, *chill touch*, *daze*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*; 1st—*disguise self*, *mage armour*, *true strike*; 2nd—*blur*.

If he can, R'thi tries to attack from hiding and remain hidden during combat, using *blur* spells if necessary; if forced to reveal himself, he tries always appear as something else, using *disguise self* spells to maintain the appearance of a friendly creature and unexpectedly striking at his targets when they have lowered their guard.

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Treasure

Besides his possessions, R'thi keeps a trophy stash in a wooden chest under his improvised rock desk. The chest, open and free of traps, contains the weapons and armour of R'thi's two dark elf victims: 2 suits of drow elite mail (treat as mithral chain shirt), 2 masterwork hand crossbows and two drow elite rapiers (treat as +1 rapier). The chest also contains 272 dwergis (treat as platinum pieces), 6 spinel gems of various colours (150 gp each), 5 extra doses of greenblood oil and 2 *potions of invisibility*.

113: The Spire Entrance

You approach a great double black wood door on a smooth, curved wall of dark masonry. The door is decorated with monstrous bas-reliefs, central to which is the image of a spider in combat position. The door has no visible lock or handle.

This 12 foot tall, 10 foot wide double darkwood gate is the entrance to the drow spire. The only way to open this door is by pulling a lever on the inner wall, right beside the door, or by sheer brute force.

Double Stone Door: 8 in. thick; hardness 5; 80 hit points; AC 5; Break DC 33.

If the door is opened without using the inner lever, an *alarm* spell activates, alerting the entire Drow Spire to the presence of intruders.

114: Kanahraun Altar

Both entrances to this cave are adorned with the severed, rotting heads of several humanoid creatures, hanging from the cave ceiling by leather strings. The cave itself is no less grisly, decorated rather than littered with humanoid remains of all kinds, among which lie several hide mattresses and other improvised furnishings. A monstrous contrivance stands out amidst all of this, rising against the far wall; a man-sized effigy with horrid demonic features, made from the bones of some large beast and decorated with several painted and feathered skulls. Two oversized but otherwise common torches illuminate the area, casting grim shadows over the grimmer remains.

This is the main cave of the savage dark elf tribe that owned these caves before the arrival of the Unh Aneghr clan to the drow spire. The cave is decorated with the hides, bones and other remains of dozens of different creatures, many of them humanoids. The most striking feature of this decoration is the six foot tall demonic effigy against the west wall, a representation of the demon Azzanoth, revered by the savage elves. The demon is made from the remains of numerous underground creatures, including even the bodies of Unh Aneghr soldiers. Two great torches light the area, giving dim and savage illumination to the entire chamber.



Creatures (EL 13+)

The savage elves that frequent and use this cave belong to the bestial Kanahraun tribe, a cannibalistic breed of dark elves with little relation to the archetypal civilised, sophisticated drow of classic tales. They struggle against the Unh Aneghr for control of the territory, although they have never attacked the Drow Spire, being content instead with foiling and sabotaging the presence of Unh Aneghr forces via hit-and-run tactics. Although the Unh Aneghr are stronger and more numerous, they have lost much more soldiers to the Kanahraun than the other way around. This cave, dedicated to the Kanahraun deity Azzanoth, is also the home of Sahj, the strange and mysterious shaman of the bestial elves. Sahj is always accompanied by 2-4 bodyguards; both Sahj and his men attack any intruder in their sacred cave savagely and relentlessly.

Sahj the Shaman (Male Drow Bbn1/Clr9): CR 11; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 1d12+1 plus 9d8+9; hp 57; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7; Grp +9; Atk +8* melee (2d4+7*/18-20, masterwork falchion) or +10 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork shortbow); Full Atk +8/+3* melee (2d4+7*/18-20, masterwork falchion) or +10/+5 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork shortbow); SA rage 1/day, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, light blindness, SR 21; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +9 (+11 vs.

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spells and spell-like abilities); Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +10, Search +6, Spot +10, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Diehard, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

*Bonuses from using Power Attack (-2 attack, +4 damage) already calculated.

Possessions: Masterwork falchion, ritual drow hide (treat as +2 *hide armour*), masterwork shortbow, quiver with 20 arrows, ritual bone bracelet (treat as *ring of protection* +2), 2 doses of rageblood brew (treat as *potions of rage*).

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0th—*create water, detect poison, guidance, mending, purify food and drink, resistance*; 1st—*bane, cause fear**, *command, divine favour, doom, magic stone*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, bull's strength, death knell**, *enthrall, shatter, sound burst*; 3rd—*animate dead**, *bestow curse, blindness/deafness, contagion, meld into stone*; 4th—*cure critical wounds, poison, unholy blight**; 5th—*slay living**, *symbol of pain*.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, melee touch attack kills single creature with 9d6 hp or less), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Kanahraun Bodyguards (1d3+1 Drow Bbn7/Ftr1): CR 9 each; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 7d12+7 plus 1d10+1; hp 59 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +8; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (2d4+1/18-20, masterwork falchion) or +11 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork shortbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+1/18-20, masterwork falchion) or +11/+6 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork shortbow); SA rage 2/day, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., DR 1/–, drow traits, improved uncanny dodge, light blindness, SR 19, trap sense +2; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +2 (+2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Search +9, Spot +9, Survival +9 (+11 following tracks); Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: Masterwork falchion, masterwork shortbow, masterwork hide armour, quiver with 20 arrows, 1 dose of lesser rageblood brew (treat as a *potion of bull's strength*).

Treasure

In addition to the possessions of Sahj and his men, the booty from the bestial elves' plunder has been gathered

in this cave and hidden; finding it requires a successful Search check (DC 25). The treasure consists of a total of 2,010 gold pieces and eight onyx gemstones (60 gp each), hidden all over the cave inside the skulls, under the rocks and among the bones. An additional successful Search check (DC 25) reveals the curved bone 'representing' the Azzanoth effigy's weapon is actually a masterfully crafted bone falchion inlaid with bloody runes, reading 'Pain-to-Bone' in the Undercommon tongue. Pain-to-bone is a +2 *falchion* combining the properties of a *wounding* and a *keen* weapon.

lv: Kanahraun Cave

This cave is full of filthy, bloody indications that someone lives here, such as rotting food, refuse, dirty fur mats and actual dried blood marks, splattered around the cave in a suspiciously patterned fashion.

These caves are where the bestial dark elves of the Kanahraun tribe live and rest when they are not out stalking their neighbours. They are full of grime, blood and what passes for home comforts among the barbaric elves.

Creatures (EL 10+)

There are always 2d4 Kanahraun savages of both genders in these caves, plus 1d2 non-combatants (children and infants). They attack intruders out of a mix of hatred and lust for living flesh.

Kanahraun Savages (2d4 Drow Bbn7): CR 8 each; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 7d12+7; hp 52 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (2d4+1/18-20, masterwork falchion) or +10 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork shortbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+1/18-20, masterwork falchion) or +10/+5 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork shortbow); SA rage 2/day, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., DR 1/–, drow traits, improved uncanny dodge, light blindness, SR 18, trap sense +2; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2 (+2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Search +10, Spot +9, Survival +8 (+10 following tracks); Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: masterwork falchion, masterwork shortbow, masterwork hide armour, quiver with 20 arrows, 1 dose of lifeblood brew (treat as a *potion of cure serious wounds*).

lv: Webwind's Cave

This cave is particularly ample and cool but otherwise unremarkable, except for a sinking, inexplicable feeling that danger lurks somewhere. Perhaps it is the unclear warning carved on the entrance. Perhaps it is the silence

– but no, it is not silence; rather, it is a single, constant sibilating whisper, not a sound as much as a constant quality of the air... yet something must be producing it...

This large cave is actually two caves; the visible one, and a larger cavern below the first, accessible via a descending pit (**L16a**). Aware of what lives inside, the Kanahraun have carved a series of symbols representing danger and power all over the cave entrance; a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25) is required to identify the symbols. A successful Survival check (DC 30) made near the entrance indicates that the feral drow not only avoid this spot but they indeed ritually give it a wide berth.

The descending passage at **L16a** is actually no more than a short slope, leading to an 80 foot wide cavern below the first one. Inside this cavern, the air is musty, heavy and wet, quite the opposite to the almost cool breeze of the entrance cavern above. The floor is muddy, surely due to the proximity of some underground waterway. Something very heavy and very much alive breathes inside this cave.

Creatures (EL 15)

Old Webwind, a great black dragon, has been roaming these levels for the past few centuries. It was him that impregnated the great spider at **I4** to beget the Unh Aneghr's Spider-Goddess at **L11**, and then mated with that as well to produce her new offspring. For more on Webwind's statistics, history and goals, read the section dedicated to him on page 69 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Webwind, Mature Adult Black Dragon: hp 276; see page 117 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Webwind has of course gathered an ample hoard during his centuries-long life; it is all in this cave, scattered around like a bed for the old lizard. The hoard includes 11,273 gold pieces, among which swim six violet garnets (450 gp each); an Athan-made, portable water clock (850 gp), a gothic copper plate (65 gp); an empty longsword scabbard made of silk and fine leather inlaid with garnets (575 gp); 3 black pearls (650 gp each); a set of gold earrings (110 gp the pair); a Small chain shirt with incredibly well-meshed white metal rings (treat as a +1 chain shirt of light fortification); a drinking cup of jewelled crystal (900 gp); a single dragon scale, lacquered and rune-covered, hanging from a silver chain (*amulet of natural armour* +2); five tourmalines (130 gp each); a small jewelled gold chest (3,100 gp) with 370 platinum pieces, a black star sapphire (1,600 gp) and a nearly invisible crystal ring (*ring of chameleon power*) inside; 2 jet stones (120 gp each); a platinum sceptre of Athan origin (4,900 gp), wrapped in jewelled cloth-of-gold curtains (1,350 gp); a plain dragon-shaped silver tiara (175 gp); a leather case containing a slender green stick shaped like an arrow (*wand of acid arrow*, 43 charges); 4 moonstones (60 gp each); a gold and

ivory drinking horn (300 gp); a wooden box containing 2 scrolls of *cure serious wounds* and a phial of crystal-blue liquid, labelled *carry the shield of god* in Draconic (*potion of shield of faith* +3); 4 pieces of obsidian (14 gp each); an emerald (1,500 gp); a coat of very fine greyish fur (275 gp); a black opal (1,150 gp); a jade sceptre with a dragon-shaped head (*rod of the viper*) and a tiger eye agate worth 5 gp.

Area M: Dwergard

This level of the Mount Moru underground is mostly a single great natural cave, hundreds of feet wide. However, there is also a small fortress, built by an army of dwarf-like creatures, occupying roughly one-fourth of the cave area. It is this fortress, Dwergard, which gives its name to the entire level.

The only known way to reach this level is via the gnomish city of Ogginnogg, detailed at length on page 50 of *The Dragon Stone*.

More details about Dwergard, its denizens and its history are given in the chapter dedicated to it on page 65 of the compilation known as *Tales of Mount Moru*

M: The Lost Road

You come to a cobblestone road, all but destroyed by time and disuse. The cobblestones now appear only in scattered rubble patches among the ancient, natural rock.

This neglected road was abandoned by the Ogginnoggian gnomes centuries ago, as the caves it leads to (these caves) are just a great barren waste with no commercial or habitation use. This was just fine for the Dwergard forces, as they had time to organise themselves and become a mighty army without any interference. The old road leads to the city of Ogginnogg (described in *The Dragon Stone*) after less than an hour's walk. Even the phosphorescent fungi lamps have dried and dulled with age, leaving the old road in a perpetual state of utter darkness.

M2: Dwerg Guard Post

You approach a group of dwarfish creatures, all of them well armed and – apparently – hostile...

There are Dwerg guard detachments in many places both inside and outside the Dwergard Fortress; such posts are labelled 'M2' in the map. The only thing all these areas have in common is the presence of Dwerg guards.

Creatures (EL 13)

The guards stationed at these posts have orders from the Queen (**M16**) to capture anything that moves, bringing it back to their superiors or killing it if it resists.

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DWERGARD AS A DUNGEON

Roughly 70% of **Area M** is a single natural cave, with 5 inch thick walls that have hardness 8, Break DC 65 and 900 hit points per 10 foot square. Dwergard itself, on the contrary, is pure state-of-the-art dwarven masonry; its walls have hardness 10, Break DC 45 and 180 hp per 10 foot square.

The cave walls are about 100 feet tall, almost giving the impression of an open space. Inside such a cave, Dwergard does not look like a subterranean labyrinth construction but a common aboveground fortress, clearly visible from a distance despite the prevailing darkness thanks to the greenish lights coming from its windows and towers.

The fortress itself is 30 feet tall; it has no defence towers but only a large, mighty stone gate that remains closed virtually all the time. Its doors are mostly 4 inch thick stone, with hardness 8, a break DC of 28 and 60 hit points. Those that are locked have an Open Lock DC of 40.

The cave is completely unlit, except for the fortress, which has lanterns of phosphorescent fungus hanging from the walls at 30-foot intervals. The tiny green lights can be seen out of the fortress windows from more than 100 feet away.

The Travelling Seal

Area M is affected by the Travelling Seal (see page 64), the curse placed by the Gods on the dungeons beneath Mount Moru. No dimensional travel is possible into, inside or out of this area; treat as a permanent *dimensional lock* effect (CL 50) in the entire level.

Dwerg Guards (5 7th level duergar fighters): CR 8 each; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 7d10+17; hp 55 each; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+4/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SA spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., duergar traits; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +1 (+3 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 14, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +0 (+2 related to stone or metal), Craft (blacksmithing) +2, Craft (stonemasonry) +2, Listen +4, Move Silently +0, Search +0 (+2 to notice unusual stonework); Spot +5; Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialisation (warhammer).

Possessions: Masterwork warhammer, masterwork light crossbow, masterwork chainmail, masterwork heavy

Random Encounters in Dwergard

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area M**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering a hostile creature, randomly determined or chosen from one of the following tables, according to the general zone where the encounter takes place:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE OUTSIDE THE DWERGARD FORTRESS

D%	Encounter
01-35	2d4 Dwerg guards ¹
36-75	1d3 derro cave-savants ²
76-90	2d6 Dwerg assassins ³
91-98	1d6+1 Dwerg templars ⁴
99-00	The Uneath ⁵

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE INSIDE THE DWERGARD FORTRESS

D%	Encounter
01-35	2d4 Dwerg guards ¹
36-70	2d4 Dwerg assassins ³
71-95	1d6+1 Dwerg templars ⁴
96-00	Keyed encounter ⁶

¹ 7th level duergar fighters; their statistics are described in **M2**.

² Derro Drd7; their statistics are described in **M5**.

³ Derro Ftr2/Rog3; their statistics are described in **M7**.

⁴ Duergar Clr5/Ftr4; their statistics are described in **M6**.

⁵ Keyed encounter; described in **M12**.

⁶ Choose one of the nearest keyed areas inside the fortress; the creature at the chosen area is encountered.

shield, case with 10 crossbow bolts, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of invisibility*.

The Dwerg guards' other special abilities are detailed under 'Dwarf' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

M3: The Dwergard Gate

You approach the massive gate of the subterranean fortress. It is a double stone gate, unadorned except for the Dwergard seal between the two doors. It looks wide enough to let a dragon pass through.

If you are outside, the entrance gate is arguably the most dangerous spot in the fortress. The doors are all but impenetrable and a sizeable force of derro assassins waits on the other side.

The massive 20-foot tall doors pivot inwards, allowing intruders to pass without seeing the guards hidden behind them. They have no lock of handle; other than brute force,

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the only way to open them is the great spool chain lever mounted on a wall behind the gate, inaccessible from the outside.

Massive Stone Gate: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; 240 hit points; AC 5; Break DC 45.

There is a row of thin arrow-slits crossing both doors, roughly 3 feet from the ground; noticing them requires a successful Spot check (DC 15).

Creatures (EL 13)

Eight Dwerg snipers are permanently stationed at the chamber behind the gate; they barrage intruders with poisoned bolts shot through the arrow-slits on the doors. Behind the impregnable gate, they have total cover and concealment against the enemy, while their ranged attacks are unimpeded.

Dwerg snipers (8 Derro Ftr1/Rog3): CR 7 each; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 1d10+1 plus 3d6+3; hp 36; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +3; Atk +9 melee (1d4+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +13 ranged (1d6/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +13/+8 ranged (1d6/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); SA poison use, sneak attack +3d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, madness, SR 15, trap sense +1, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 3, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Hide +15, Jump +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +15, Spot +3, Tumble +8; Far Shot, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (light crossbow).

Possessions: Masterwork repeating light crossbow, masterwork short sword, case with ten poisoned crossbow bolts (greenblood oil), masterwork studded leather armour.

Spell-like abilities: At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 12); 1/day—*daze* (DC 12), *sound burst* (DC 14); caster level 12th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

The Dwerg snipers' other special abilities are detailed under 'Derro' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

In addition to their possessions, one of the Dwerg snipers carries a set of keys for all the doors in **Area M4**.

M4: Entrance hall

You approach a great but dull stone hall. The only remarkable features of the chamber are the lights – phosphorescent greenish lamps hanging from the tall

ceiling – and the doors. Five sets of double stone doors and a single, smaller door lead out of the chamber; four of these sets are distributed among two opposing walls (two double gates in each wall) to your left and right, while the fifth one is an immense entrance gate covered by a double stone archway. The smaller door is located on the wall far opposite to this great gate. There are absolutely no decorations on the walls, floor or ceiling, except for the two stone arches leading to the great entrance gates. The bareness of the chamber and the green light combine to give the area an eerie, nightmarish feeling.

This is the great entrance hall to the Dwergard fortress. It is a 50 foot by 20 foot plain black stone chamber, with no ornaments other than the double archway 20 feet before the great gate to the north. Many doors lead out of this chamber; first, the single door on the south wall leads deeper inside the fortress to **M6**; then the four sets of double doors on the west and east walls all lead to the promenade on both sides of the chamber; finally, the archway and the great gate to the north lead outside the fortress. All doors in this chamber are locked (Open Lock DC 40) and built with very small locks and handles, thus providing the least possible handholds when the trap activates (see below).

Traps (EL 14)

When the small door to the south is touched without pressing a safety switch, a deadly trap activates; the entire chamber floor from the north gate to this door slides inside the west and east walls, discovering the deep pit below. At the same time as the floor slides, all the doors of the chamber slam shut, including the north gate; this virtually guarantees any creatures standing on the floor will unavoidably fall into the pit. The safety switch is hidden in the inner wall beside the south door (Search DC 25). If pressed, it prevents the trap from springing when the door is touched; once the trap has been activated, pressing it has no effect. The floor slides back into place exactly one round after activation, most likely trapping any fallen creatures beneath it.

Disappearing Floor Trap: CR 14; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); DC 30 Reflex save avoids; 180 ft. deep (14d6, fall); multiple targets (every target inside **Area M4**); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30. *Market Price:* 121,800 gp.

M5: The Guardians

A campsite blocks the passage here, with a series of hide tents, bags and bedrolls spread about the cave. A tiny bonfire and some rustic lamps hanging from the tent entrances illuminate the area; some meat chunks of unknown origin are being cooked over the fire.

This campsite belongs to the cave-savants, a rebellious branch of derro savants that have left behind the cruel

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chaos of sorcery and embraced the cruel chaos of nature. The site consists of no more than five or six tents, all made from animal hides and illuminated by primitive lanterns. The cave-savants use the place as a base and headquarters while they roam the caves, though it also serves as a guard post for the horror that lives at **Area M12**, which the cave savants have adopted as their responsibility.

Creatures (EL 13+)

There are always 1d2+1 cave-savants in the campsite, practising their inexplicable sacred rites. Despite having rejected the more urban society of other derro, they are still quite mad and incredibly wicked. Through their strange religion and rituals, they have found a way to partially overcome their madness, reducing its effects just enough to allow them to become divine spellcasters. The cave-savants approach intruders with curiosity at first; then they attempt to capture them for ritual torture and sacrifice. Whatever happens, their priority is to prevent anyone from continuing towards **Area M12**.

Cave-savants (1d2+1 Derro Drd7): CR 11 each; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8 plus 7d8; hp 45; Init +7; Spd 15 ft.; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +8; Grp +4; Atk +13 melee (1d4+1/18-20, masterwork sickle) or +12 ranged (1d6/19-20, repeating light crossbow); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d4+1/18-20, sickle) or +12/+7 ranged (1d6/19-20, repeating light crossbow); SA poison use, sneak attack +1d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., madness, nature sense, resist nature's lures, SR 15, trackless step, vulnerability to sunlight, wild empathy, wild shape 3/day, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +13 (+17 vs. fey spell-like abilities); Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Craft (alchemy)+13, Hide +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Spot +9, Survival +17; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: Repeating light crossbow, masterwork sickle, case with ten poisoned crossbow bolts (greenblood oil), masterwork studded leather armour.

Spells Prepared (6/5/4/2/1; save DC 12 + spell level): 0th—*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic* (2), *flare*, *resistance* (2); 1st—*cure light wounds*, *magic stone*, *obscuring mist*, *produce flame* (2); 2nd—*flame blade*, *flaming sphere*, *heat metal*, *soften earth and stone*; 3rd—*meld into stone*, *poison*; 4th—*spike stones*.

Spell-like abilities: At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 13); 1/day—*daze* (DC 13), *sound burst* (DC 15); caster level 12th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

The cave-savants' other special abilities are detailed under 'Derro' in Chapter One of the *MM*. Their faith and focus have diminished the effects of their madness; if they are ever restored to sanity, they recover only 3 Wisdom and lose 3 Charisma. The cave-savant's druid abilities are explained under 'Druid' in Chapter Three of the *Player's Handbook*. Cave-savants have no animal companions.

Treasure

In addition to their possessions, the cave-savants keep a significant stash, well hidden and scattered among their bags and chests. A successful Search check (DC 30) is required to find it all. The treasure includes a total of 337 dweergis (treat as platinum pieces), four pagan idols carved in strange greyish wood (worth 115 gp each), 3 *potions of cure serious wounds*, a golden ritual mask (worth 1,055 gp), a golden sickle (useless for combat, 1,250 gp), six additional doses of greenblood oil, a jewelled silver torc and 2 alchemist's bags. In addition, the cave-savants have a Morudhain relic; a carved stone, left by the passing of the Dragon Stone clan through Mount Moru. It is unknown where or how they got this stone, as the Morudhain never reached this deep in their quest; however, the stone is genuine. The text written on it (in the Morudhain tongue) details a series of druidic rites and traditions, which in fact were the inspiration for the cave-savants' current lifestyle, though the dogma got quite twisted when extrapolated to derro culture.

Mo: Dining hall

This is a fairly plain stone chamber, with four columns, one on each corner, and five stone doors. Other than that, its only features are three long stone tables, parallel to the walls, with two long stone benches on each side. There seem to be no dishes of any kind on the tables. A green light lamp hangs from each of the four columns.

As the tables and benches indicate, this is the Dweergard fortress' dining room. The Dweerg army soldiers take turns



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to sit at the tables (usually duergar first, then derro) and their priests magically create food for them. It is not the most appetising fare but it keeps the soldiers nourished.

Four of the stone doors leading out of this chamber connect with the fortress corridors; the remaining one, on the north wall, leads to **Area M4**. This last door is the only locked one (Open Lock DC 40); the remaining ones are closed but easy to open.

Creatures (EL 14)

A team of Dwerf templars, derisively called 'the cooks' by the other templars for their task of preparing the food, is constantly on watch here, guarding the dining room at all hours.

Dwerf Templars (4 duergar Clr5/Ftr4): CR 10 each; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 5d8+5 plus 4d10+7; hp 56 each; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +7; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +7 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+4/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +7 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SA spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., duergar traits, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +6 (+8 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 14, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Appraise -1 (+1 related to stone or metal), Craft (blacksmithing) +1, Craft (stonemasonry) +1, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +3, Move Silently -2, Search -1 (+1 to notice unusual stonework); Spot +3; Diehard, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialisation (warhammer).

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/2+1/1+1; spell DC 11 + spell level): 0th—*create water* (3), *guidance*, *resistance*; 1st—*bane*, *doom* (2), *protection from good**, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *hold person*, *desecrate**; 3rd—*create food and water*, *dispel magic**.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Magic (use magic items as 2nd level wizard).

The Dwerf templars' other special abilities are detailed under 'Dwarf' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

M: Central Passage

There is a flight of ascending stairs in the middle of this corridor; two sets of stone doors can be seen to the left and right.

This 60 foot long east-west passage is the centre of the Dwerford fortress, dividing the construction in half. It has four doors, two on the north and two on the south wall,

located on the western and eastern ends. These doors are all closed but unlocked; they lead to more passages. The stairs in the middle of the south wall lead up to **M13** on the fortress' second storey.

Creatures (EL 14)

This area is constantly watched by a squad of Dwerf assassins, with orders to stop any intruders from advancing further into the fortress by any means necessary.

Dwerf Assassins (8 Derro Ftr2/Rog3): CR 8 each; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 2d10+2 plus 3d6+3; hp 43; Init +8; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +7; Grp +4; Atk +14 melee (1d4+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +13 ranged (1d6 plus poison/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d4+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) and +12 melee (1d4/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +13/+8 ranged (1d6 plus poison/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); SA poison use, sneak attack +3d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, madness, SR 15, trap sense +1, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 4, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Hide +15, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +15, Spot +4, Tumble +8; Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Possessions: Masterwork repeating light crossbow, 2 masterwork short swords, case with ten poisoned crossbow bolts (greenblood oil), masterwork studded leather armour.

Spell-like abilities: At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 12); 1/day—*daze* (DC 12), *sound burst* (DC 14); caster level 12th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

The Dwerf assassins' other special abilities are detailed under 'Derro' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

M8: Empty Room

This small square room has been precariously fitted to accommodate three people, with three dirty cots on the ground, some boxes used as crude furniture and a single green light lamp.

These rooms are used as the barracks of the Dwerford fortress, where low-ranking soldiers live and rest when not on duty.

Creatures (Average EL 10)

At any given time, one of these rooms holds 1d6-3 (minimum of 0) Dwerf guards (see **M2**) or Dwerf assassins (see **M7**); 50% chance of each. They attack immediately.

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Treasure

In addition to their carried possessions, the Dwerg found in these chambers have 2d6x10 dwergis (treat as platinum pieces) each.

Mq: Armoury

You enter a dungeon-like, grey stone room filled with smoke, heat and sizzling noises. Several blacksmithing tools adorn the walls and corners; three forges burn on the floor. Some gnomish creatures, their hands and feet chained together, work at these forges under the surveillance of what appear to be more of these dark, subterranean dwarves. Rows and racks of weapons, most of them of astounding quality even at a casual glance, line the walls of this chamber. There is no more light here than the little emanating from the forges' fires.

As its appearance indicates, this is the Dwerg Fortress' forge and armoury. The three forges in the middle of the chamber give a +2 circumstance bonus to any Craft check involving metal and made using them. The smoke from the forges is funnelled up through a cavity on the ceiling, which leads out of the mountain at some point but is unsuited for living creatures.

Creatures (EL 14)

There are always 1d10+10 gnome captives in the chamber, working at the Dwerg forge.

Gnome Captives (1st Level Svirkneblin Warriors):

hp 8 each (current 1d8 each due to exhaustion and mistreatment); see the corresponding entry under 'Gnome' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The Dwerg taskmaster, known only as Hammer, can usually be found here, training some apprentices or checking the state of his tools (the gnome captives). He has taken the vows of Toil, the duergar god of labour and exhaustion, as part of his dedication to smithing.

Hammer, the Dwerg Taskmaster (Male Duergar Clr7/

Ftr4): CR 12; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 7d8+21 plus 4d10+15; hp 89; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +9; Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d8+6/x3, sacred warhammer) or +9 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); Atk +14/+9 melee (1d8+6/x3, sacred warhammer) or +9/+4 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SA duergar traits, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., duergar traits, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +2, Will +8 (+10 vs. spells and spell-like abilities); Str 16, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +0 (+2 related to stone or metal or +4 related to weapons and armour), Craft (armoursmithing) +12, Craft (weaponsmithing) +12,

Craft (stonemasonry) +2, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +0, Search +0 (+2 to notice unusual stonework); Spot +4; Diehard, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialisation (warhammer).

Possessions: Sacred warhammer (treat as +1 *unholy warhammer*), masterwork light crossbow, Dwerg chainmail (treat as +1 *chainmail*), Dwerg shield (treat as +1 *heavy steel shield*), holy symbol of Toil (the duergar god), case with 10 crossbow bolts, 3 *potions of cure serious wounds*.

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1; save DC 12 + spell level): 0th—*guidance* (4), *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*command* (3), *doom*, *protection from good**, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *calm emotions*, *detect thoughts**, *enthrall*, *hold person*; 3rd—*bestow curse* (2), *clairaudience/clairvoyance**; 4th—*divination**, *divine power*.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are class skills, cast divination spells at +1 caster level).

The Dwerg Taskmaster's other special abilities are detailed under 'Dwarf' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Finally, this chamber also holds 2d4 Dwerg smiths at all times, watching over the slaves but also often crafting weapons themselves. Both Hammer and his smiths attack any intruder immediately.

Dwerg Smiths (2d4 7th Level Duergar Fighters):

hp 55 each; use the Dwerg Guard statistics described in **M2** but replace the skills described there with the following: Appraise +0 (+2 related to stone or metal or +4 related to weapons or armour), Craft (armoursmithing) +9, Craft (weaponsmithing) +9, Craft (stonemasonry) +2, Listen +2, Move Silently -1, Search +0 (+2 to notice unusual stonework); Spot +2.

Treasures

In addition to the smiths' possessions, the room contains 10 light repeating crossbows (8 Small and 2 Medium), 23 Medium light crossbows, 6 Small light crossbows, 24 Small short swords, 9 Medium short swords, 31 Medium warhammers, 6 Small warhammers, 17 Small daggers, 7 Medium daggers, 15 suits of studded leather armour (12 Small and 3 Medium), 9 Medium suits of chainmail, a suit of Medium half-plate, 8 Small bucklers, 4 Medium bucklers, 6 light steel shields (4 Medium and 2 Small) and 10 heavy steel shields (7 Medium and 3 Small). All the listed weapons, armour and ammunition are of masterwork quality. There are also enough tools to make five sets of masterwork crafter's tools (armoursmithing or weaponsmithing).

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Mio: Treasure Room

You enter a square stone chamber, featureless except for several chests, bags and scattered coins.

This is the treasure chamber of the Dwergard fortress, a 20 foot by 20 foot square stone room with no illumination. There are five chests and bags around the floor, all filled with coins and jewellery.

Traps (EL 14)

The coins and other treasures in the chamber are fakes; the jewels are coloured glass, the coins polished bone. A successful Appraise check (DC 35) is required to notice the forgery. Furthermore, the fakes are smeared with deadly contact poison; any living creature touching any portion of the treasure or its containers is subject to the poison's effects.

Poisoned Fake Treasure: CR 14; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); repair reset; multiple targets (as many as are touching the treasure simultaneously); poison (strengthened black lotus extract, DC 25 Fortitude save resists, 3d6 Con/3d6 Con); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30. *Market Price:* 128,800 gp.

Treasure

Despite the deadly decoy, there actually is a treasure in the chamber, only hidden in a secret compartment under the floor. Finding this compartment requires a successful Search check (DC 35). The compartment contains the following real treasure: 7,000 gold pieces and 9 black opals (700 gp each) distributed among 3 large stone coffers, plus the second coffer also contains a smaller metal chest (locked; Open Lock DC 40), which in turn contains some items the Dwerger have found no use for: 2 *magic circle against evil* scrolls, a *hallow* scroll, a single longbow arrow with a coral point and aqua feathers (*aquatic humanoid slaying arrow*) and a small flask with some perfumed liquid inside (*elixir of love*).

Mii: Arcane Lab

This seems to be a mix of a wizard's laboratory, a garbage dump and a gory nightmare. There are all kinds of rubbish all over the floor and furniture, from unknowable ritual contraptions to actual refuse, including the blood and organs of several living creatures, collected in boxes or simply strewn on the floor. The body of a grey-skinned gnome, violated and hacked beyond belief, lies on one of the stone tables, connected to a strange apparatus. You would like to think it is dead, except its eyes are weeping. A dreamlike green light oscillates over the entire scene, coming from two lamps hanging from the ceiling.

This is the fortress' arcane lab, where a team of sages works day and night to improve the technology of the Dwerger army. The lab looks like a madman arranged it, with impossibly grisly decorations made with a combination of

organic remains and useless garbage disguised as complex contraptions. Of course none of these machines work at all.

The light in the chamber comes from two phosphorescent-fungus lamps hanging by chains from the ceiling.

Creatures (EL 15)

Incredible as it may seem, there are actually sleeping accommodations under all the rubbish in this room; they are for G'gor the Dwerger Savant and his apprentices, who live and spend most of their time in the lab. They are always eager to welcome new test subjects.

G'gor the Dwerger Savant (Male Derro Savant, Sor10): CR 13; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 10d4+19; hp 60; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp +5; Atk +11 melee (1d3+2/17-20, dissecting dagger) or +11 ranged (1d6 plus poison/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d3+2/17-20, dissecting dagger) or +11/+6 ranged (1d6 plus poison/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); SA poison use, sneak attack +1d6, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., madness, SR 15, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3 (+5 with alchemical and engineering items), Bluff +14, Concentration +11, Craft (alchemy) +12, Craft (engineering) +12, Diplomacy +7, Hide +13, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Move Silently +13, Spellcraft +15; Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Toughness (3).

Possessions: Dissecting dagger (+1 keen dagger), masterwork repeating light crossbow, case with five normal crossbow bolts and five poisoned crossbow bolts (greenblood oil), *amulet of natural armour* +2.

Spell-like abilities: At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 15); 1/day—*daze* (DC 15), *sound burst* (DC 17); caster level 13th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Spells Known (6/8/7/7/6/4; save DC 15 + spell level): 0th—*acid splash*, *detect poison*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st—*cause fear*, *hypnotism*, *identify*, *magic weapon*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness*, *ghoul touch*, *hideous laughter*, *touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*stinking cloud*, *suggestion*, *vampiric touch*; 4th—*confusion*, *crushing despair*; 5th—*magic jar*.

G'gor's other special abilities are detailed under 'Derro' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

G'gor's Apprentices (2 Derro Savant Apprentices, Rog5/Sor3): CR 11 each; Small monstrous humanoid;

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HD 3d8+3 plus 5d6+8 plus 3d4+6; hp 55 each; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +7; Grp +3; Atk +9 melee (1d4+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +10 ranged (1d6/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +10/+5 ranged (1d6/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); SA poison use, sneak attack +4d6, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., madness, SR 15, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 6, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +3, Bluff +12, Concentration +8, Craft (alchemy) +8, Craft (engineering) +8, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +3 (+5 acting in character), Hide +13, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +13, Search +7, Spot +4, Survival -2 (+0 when following tracks and/or underground); Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Toughness (2).

Possessions: Masterwork repeating light crossbow, masterwork short sword, case with seven normal crossbow bolts and three poisoned crossbow bolts (greenblood oil), *ring of protection* +1.

Spell-like abilities: At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 13); 1/day—*daze* (DC 13), *sound burst* (DC 15); caster level 11th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Spells Known (6/6; save DC 13 + spell level): 0th—*detect poison*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*; 1st—*identify*, *magic weapon*, *ray of enfeeblement*.

The apprentices' other special abilities are detailed under 'Derro' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The gnome on the table is being tortured and kept alive by several cruel mechanical and alchemical devices; nothing short of a *regeneration* or *resurrection* spell can help him now. If he could, he would ask to be killed rather than to live and risk ever going through this again.

Treasure

G'gor and his apprentices keep their treasure buried somewhere under the litter of the room. Each of these items requires a separate Search check (DC 20) to locate: an Athan crown inlaid with jade encrustations (1,630 gp), still attached to the mummified skull that wore it originally; a great Athan tapestry, faded yet still very valuable (350 gp), used to wrap some fresh entrails; an ebony and gold sceptre (400 gp) used to replace one of the tables' legs; an exotic wood painting frame (with no painting), broken in two pieces (50 gp each piece); the painting that belonged to the frame, the linen tied to some leather strips and used as an apron (880 gp); a mummified desiccated human hand in a jar (actually a *hand of glory*); a golden burial mask (750 gp) with some bloody remains of peeled humanoid skin on the inside; an ancient obsidian ceremonial knife (75 gp) adapted as a scalpel; a ruined

ivory painting brush (45 gp) and a jewelled wooden coffer (1,030 gp) used to stash old clothes under a garbage pile. There are also 446 dwergis (treat as platinum pieces) scattered all over the chamber.

M12: The Unearth

This large crack on the cave wall seems to howl and an unnaturally hot wind blows through it.

There is a great, 30 foot by 60 foot crack on the south western wall of this underground cave. The crack leads deep down into a tunnel complex that, according to legend, descends all the way to the lower planes. In truth, the crack is simply a ramification of the great gorge (M17) leading down to **Area N**.

Creatures (EL 15)

The crack has an inhabitant; a horrid, unnatural monster seemingly made of pure formless chaos; an infernal being of pure twisted primal matter, bloated with the deepest evil imaginable; a monster that can topple mountains from their foundation and devour the roots of earth itself. Dwarf savants call it the Unearth, though such a creature is beyond any name...

The Unearth (Advanced Half-Fiend Delver): CR 15; Huge outsider; HD 21d8+150; hp 244; Init +7; Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +15; Grp +34; Atk +24 melee (2d6+11 plus 2d6 acid, claw) or +24 melee (2d6+11 plus 2d6 acid, bite); Full Atk +24 melee (2d6+11 plus 2d6 acid, 2 claws) and +19 melee (2d6+11 plus 2d6 acid, bite); Space/reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA corrosive slime, smite good, spell-like abilities; SQ DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid and poison, resistance to cold 10, electrical 10 and fire 10, SR 31, stone shape, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +10, Will +14; Str 32, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +31, Escape Artist +27, Gather Information +4, Hide +19, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +28, Knowledge (local) +28, Knowledge (nature) +30, Listen +28, Move Silently +27, Search +28, Spot +28, Survival +26 (+28 following tracks, in natural environments or underground); Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Power Attack, Toughness, Track.

The Unearth's natural attacks count as magic for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Smite Good: Once per day, The Unearth may make a single melee attack with a +20 bonus to damage against a good-aligned foe.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*darkness*, *poison* (DC 16), *unholy aura* (DC 20); 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 19), *contagion* (DC 16), *desecrate*, *destruction* (DC 19),

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horrid wilting (DC 20), *summon monster IX* (bebilith only), *unhallow* (DC 17), *unholy blight* (DC 16). Caster level 21st. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

The Unearth's other special abilities are detailed under 'Delver' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Due to its insights into the configuration of the surrounding caves, the Unearth is the only living being that knows about the secret access from the tunnels to the Dwerg fortress' western wall. Getting its cooperation to reveal it could be a bit tricky, though...

M13: The Altar

You face two stone doors framing a double archway; all of it is dull grey and unadorned. A short antechamber can be seen beyond the archway, ending in a large stone door.

This antechamber includes the Dwerg Fortress' temple, as well as the rooms of its two main priests. There is a twin altar dedicated to Toil and Torture, the duergar and derro gods, in the centre of the small antechamber beyond the archway. A promenade goes around this altar, leading into the great door leading into M14.

The small rooms on either side of the antechamber are the quarters of both the Dwerg priests (see below). Each of the rooms has a fine bed, a wardrobe and a stone end table with two drawers.

The four doors in this area are locked (Open Lock DC 40).

Creatures (EL 14)

The priests of Toil and Torture live in the two rooms adjacent to the antechamber; Mammheinar, priest of Toil, lives in the east room; Sh'tagor, 'priest' of Torture, who is actually a wizard, lives in the west room. If they hear anyone entering the antechamber, Sh'tagor and Mammheinar come out of their rooms, intent on meeting any visitors in an appropriate manner.

Sh'tagor, Priest of Torture (Male Derro Savant, Derro Rog1/Sor8): CR 12; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8 plus 1d6 plus 8d4+3; hp 40; Init +8; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +3; Atk +13 melee (1d4+1 plus 1 Con/19-20, sacred blade) or +13 ranged (1d6 plus poison/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d4+1 plus 1 Con/19-20, sacred blade) or +13/+8 ranged (1d6 plus poison/19-20, masterwork repeating light crossbow); SA poison, sneak attack +2d6, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., madness, SR 15, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +11, Will +15; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Concentration +9 (+13 casting defensively), Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6 (+8 acting in character), Hide +19, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (religion) +5, Move Silently +18, Spellcraft +8; Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: Sacred blade (+1 *unholy wounding dagger*), masterwork repeating light crossbow, case with eight normal crossbow bolts and two poisoned crossbow bolts (greenblood oil), holy symbol of Torture (*amulet of natural armour* +2), keys to all the doors at M13.

Spell-like abilities: At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 16); 1/day—*daze* (DC 16), *sound burst* (DC 18); caster level 13th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Spells Known (6/8/8/6/4; save DC 16 + spell level): 0th—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *resistance*; 1st—*cause fear*, *hypnotism*, *mage armour*, *magic weapon*, *obscuring mist*; 2nd—*acid arrow*, *hypnotic pattern*, *touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*major image*, *vampiric touch*; 4th—*confusion*.

Sh'tagor's other special abilities are detailed under 'Derro' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Mammheinar, Priest of Toil (Male Duergar Clr11): CR 12; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 11d8+36; hp 85; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +8; Grp +10; Atk +11 melee (1d8+3/x3, sacred warhammer) or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); Atk

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+11/+6 melee (1d8+3/x3, sacred warhammer) or +8/+3 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SA duergar traits, rebuke undead, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 120 ft., duergar traits, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +2, Will +10; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +0 (+2 related to stone or metal), Craft (blacksmithing) +2, Craft (stonemasonry) +2, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +4, Move Silently +0, Search +0 (+2 to notice unusual stonework), Spellcraft +13, Spot +4; Combat Casting, Diehard, Endurance, Toughness.

Possessions: Sacred warhammer (treat as +1 *unholy warhammer*), masterwork light crossbow, Dwerf chainmail (treat as +1 *chainmail*), Dwerf shield (treat as +1 *heavy steel shield*), holy symbol of Toil (the duergar god), case with 10 crossbow bolts, keys to all the doors at **M13**. 3 *potions of cure serious wounds*.

Spells Prepared (6/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/2+1/1+1; save DC 13 + spell level): 0th—*guidance* (2), *resistance* (2), *virtue* (2); 1st—*cause fear*, *command*, *doom*, *magic stone*, *protection from good**, *shield of faith* (2); 2nd—*bull's strength*, *calm emotions*, *detect thoughts**, *enthral*, *hold person* (2); 3rd—*bestow curse* (2), *clairaudience/clairvoyance**, *dispel magic* (2), *magic vestment*; 4th—*cure critical wounds* (2), *divination**, *divine power*; 5th—*flame strike*, *true seeing**, *wall of stone*; 6th—*blade barrier*, *create undead**.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are class skills, cast divination spells at +1 caster level).

Mammheinar's other special abilities are detailed in the 'Duergar' subsection under 'Dwarf' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

In addition to their carried possessions, each of the two priests has 21 sheets of parchment, ink and quill pen in his end table and 2,300 gp worth of fine clothes in his wardrobe. There is also a hidden compartment at the base of the altar (Search DC 35) containing the gathered offerings of the Torture/Toil cult, including 801 dwerfing (treat as platinum pieces). The Toil effigy is depicted holding a staff; this is actually a *staff of earth and stone* with 13 charges, which can be removed from the statue. Recognising the staff as real requires a successful Spot check (DC 35).

M14: The Granite King

This must be what the builders of this fortress thought should be a very majestic room, considering there are actually a couple of carvings on the drab grey rock walls.

Four lamps of flickering green light hang from the corners of the chamber; on the far wall there is a large stone throne.

This chamber serves as the fortress' throne room, where the Dwerf's Granite King makes public appearances and pretends to rule the Dwerf band in the Queen's stead. The room has no features except for the Granite King's throne and the four lamps hanging from the corners.

The chamber's double stone door is always locked; only Taemorai (**M16**) has the keys to this door and she only opens it when the Granite King is scheduled for an audience.

Double Stone Door: 4 in. thick; hardness 8; 120 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 40; Break DC 30.

There is a secret door (Search DC 40) behind the throne, leading to Taemorai's chambers (**M15** and **M16**). No living Dwerf knows of this door's existence.

Creatures (EL 15)

The Granite King doubles (there are eight of them) can usually be found here. They are not real creatures, but half-illusory constructs, made to resemble the same famous duergar hero. These doubles are completely under the control of the witch Taemorai, taking turns to appear in public as the Dwerf's 'Granite King'. When idle, the doubles remain immobile in this chamber, attacking any intruder that comes near. The full history the Granite King and his doubles can be found in page 65 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

The Granite King (8 Simulacrums (7th Level Fighters)):

CR 8 each; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 7d10+24; hp 62 each; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (1d8+5/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +10 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5/x3, masterwork warhammer) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SA duergar traits, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., duergar traits; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +0 (+2 related to stone or metal), Craft (blacksmithing) +2, Craft (stonemasonry) +2, Listen +7, Move Silently +2, Search +0 (+2 to notice unusual stonework); Spot +6; Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialisation (warhammer).

Possessions: Masterwork warhammer, masterwork light crossbow, masterwork chainmail, masterwork heavy shield, case with 10 crossbow bolts.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

The Granite King doubles have all the duergar special abilities listed under 'Dwarf' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

It bears noting that, while the Granite King doubles are illusory, their equipment is not; if the doubles are destroyed, their armour and weapons remain. These armour and weapons are crafted specifically to impress the Granite King's Dwerg subjects, so they are extremely flashy and majestic, without detracting from their usefulness.

M13: Inner Laboratory

This room beyond this stone archway is spacious, neat and simple, despite being full of strange items and furniture: several shelves holding strange coloured flasks, herbs, animal remains, books and scrolls, all neatly arranged and ordered; a large stone slab, apparently made to accommodate a human being; a stone table full of what appear to be crafting tools; a few stuffed animals and a stone divan with black satin sheets. The entire room receives light from three well-placed green flame torches.

This is Taemorai's laboratory, where she conducts her alchemical, engineering and magical experiments. There is a stone table where she makes her Craft checks, a stone divan where she reads and rests, and a large stone slab where she lays the subjects of her experiments down. She has five stone shelves to hold her scrolls, books, potions and spell components; the most valuable stuff she keeps in a special compartment (see **treasure**, below). She also has a grim-looking stuffed owl and lizard and a linen apron hanging from the wall, stained with the results of endless experiments. The stone table in the middle of the chamber has equipment equivalent to a set of masterwork artisan's tools and a masterwork alchemist's lab; they are not portable, so their benefits only apply if they are used on this location.

The room has no doors; it is illuminated by three everburning torches.

Creatures (EL 15)

Taemorai herself spends most of her time in this room, when she is not sleeping or giving instructions to her Granite King doubles; there is a 65% chance of finding her here at any given time, unless she was already not found at **M16**. Complete notes on Taemorai, as well as her personality, tactics and history, can be found on page 65 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Taemorai, the Queen of Dwergard (Female Elf Sor14): hp 80; see *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

In addition to her carried possessions, Taemorai has many valuable items in this chamber. The shelves hold at least one of each spell component required by her known spells; in addition, there are a *potion of shield of faith* +3,

a *potion of undetectable alignment*, two *potions of eagle's splendour*, a *potion of blur* and a *potion of cure moderate wounds*. The arcane books in her shelves contain enough information to give a +2 circumstance bonus on any Knowledge (arcana) check made using them as reference. Sixteen of these books count as spellbooks, containing all the spells from the sorcerer/wizard list up to 5th level (an average of three books per spell level) and all of Taemorai's known 6th and 7th level spells (in the last book). Among these books there are also scrolls with the following spells: *arcane sight*, *daylight*, *dispel magic*, *gentle repose*, *greater magic weapon*, *halt undead*, *invisibility sphere*, *phantom steed* and *tiny hut*. There is also a secret compartment hidden behind the wall section where she hangs her linen apron; finding this compartment requires a successful Search check (DC 40). The compartment holds Starclaw, Taemorai's family weapon (an adamantine longsword), inside a plain but nice silk and leather scabbard; this weapon is the only memento Taemorai keeps of her adventuring mother. The compartment also holds a single dose of *stone salve*.

M14: The Queen's Chambers

Beyond the stone archway there is a luxurious, well-kept and comfortable bedroom. It has two dressers full of exotic clothes, a large curtained bed and a stone end table, with dark and elegant tapestry. There is a green light lamp hanging from the ceiling and another on the end table; a full-body mirror on the right wall reflects both of these lights.

These are Taemorai's quarters, where she rests, meditates and schemes. All of the furniture and articles in the room are non-magical; however, Taemorai does use the mirror on the south wall for divination spells.

Creatures (EL 15)

There is a 35% chance of finding Taemorai herself in this room, unless she already failed to show up at **M15**, in which case she is automatically here. Complete notes on Taemorai, as well as her personality, tactics and history, can be found on page 65 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Taemorai, the Queen of Dwergard (female elf Sor14): hp 80; see *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasure

Just the tapestry, sheets and curtains in this room are worth a rough total of 2,000 gold pieces; Taemorai's wardrobe alone is worth a rough total of 3,500 gp. There is also a secret compartment on the east wall (Search DC 40) containing 662 dwergis (treat as platinum pieces), Taemorai's diary (detailed on page 68 of *Tales of Mount Moru*) and a small locked coffer (Open Lock DC 40) containing 1,504 gp and a golden chain with a single diamond pendant (worth 6,000 gp).

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

M17: The Great Gorge

You stand before what must be the widest, deepest abyss you have ever witnessed, an ocean of blackness that makes you dizzy just looking at it. Your merest breath makes a thousand echoes on the rock walls; the unfathomable depths call on you like a magnet...

This imposing, 20 mile deep gorge leads down to an immense tunnel complex after roughly 12 hours of climbing down (Climb check DC 30). These tunnels lead, after another day of steady sloping descent, to **Area N**, the deepest known place in Mount Moru and probably the world.

Area N: The Lightless Depths

These caves are the deepest point below Mount Moru, inhabited by long-forgotten creatures of an age where gods and demons walked the earth; legend has it the caves connect to the bottom of the sea, where the fiends that created the world still sleep, waiting for its destruction...

The lightless depths are only accessible from the underground cracks at **M12** and **M17**; they are otherwise out of reach from anywhere and anyone in the known world.

N1: Reaching the Depths

You see nothing. The darkness here is so deep, the air so stale, you feel like you are stepping away from your time, away from your world, into a realm of nothingness – primeval, evil nothingness. It feels as if you were closer to creation – dark, formless creation – but also as if the world had ended here. This surely is the end of the road, for there is nothing more. There can be nothing more.

This chamber is the bottom of a long sloping grotto, many miles long, leading steadily down from **Area M**. A character climbing back up may reach the base of the Great Gorge at **M17** after little more than a day's walk; after that, **M17** or **M12** may be reached by a 12-hour climb (DC 30). Any character falling from this climb suffers 20d6 points of falling damage.

N2: Achrida's Lair

The smell of age and decay is quite strong here, even through the heavy dampening air of the cave. It seems to be a very old natural cave. There seem to be bones on the floor. Suddenly, you see two points of red light...

This cave has served as a lair for the night hag Achrida ever since the Travelling Seal (see page 64) locked her inside Mount Moru. The cave is essentially bare, with no features other than the remains of Achrida's kills.

Creatures (EL 13)

The night hag Achrida became trapped in the Lightless Depths when the Gods erected the Travelling Seal around Mount Moru. In the intervening millennia, Achrida has become quite mad with loneliness and claustrophobia, trapped in the crude Material Plane and unable to do anything about it. For a while, she just killed time killing things; it allowed her to vent her frustration and indulge her nature – however, the passing millennia left her weak and tired. She has bullied some of the Forgotten Ones (see **Area N11**) into giving her periodical sacrifice; other than that, she has all but lost her drive to hunt, to kill and to live. Nevertheless, she will see any intruder as prey – and indulge herself.

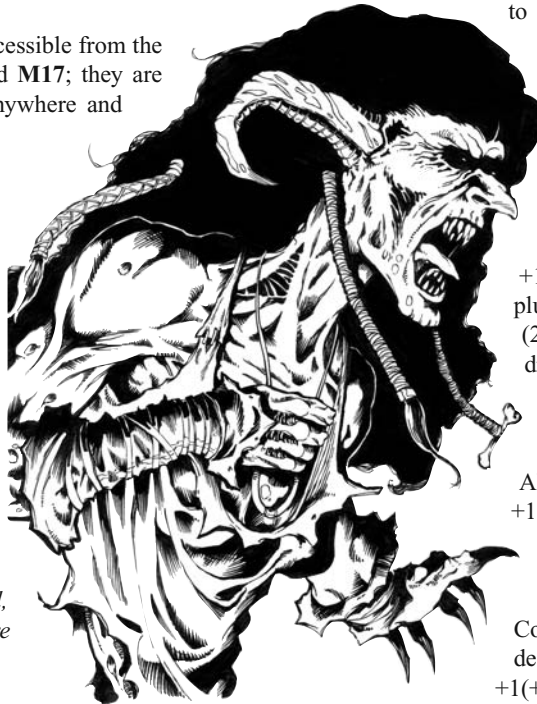
Achrida (Advanced Night Hag):

CR 13; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 16d8+70; hp 142; Init +5; Spd 20 ft; AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +16; Grp +20; Atk +20 melee (2d6+6 plus disease, bite); Full Atk +20 melee (2d6+6 plus disease, bite); SA disease, dream haunting, spell-like abilities; SQ DR 10/cold iron and magic, immunity to cold, fire, charm, sleep and fear, spell resistance 25; AL LE; SV Fort +16*, Ref +13*, Will +15*; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +20, Concentration +23 (+27 casting defensively), Diplomacy +3, Disguise +1(+3 acting), Intimidate +22, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +24, Ride +20, Sense Motive +22, Spellcraft +20, Spot +24; Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Toughness (2).

*Includes heartstone bonus.

Achrida's special abilities are detailed under 'Night Hag' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC against her disease ability is 22; the caster level for her spell-like abilities is 16. The Travelling Seal prevents Achrida from using her *dream haunting* and *etherealness* abilities.



UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

THE LIGHTLESS DEPTHS AS A DUNGEON

The lightless depths are pure unworked, natural stone, untouched by intelligent life since time out of mind. The walls here have hardness 8, a thickness of five feet, break DC 65 and 900 hit points per 10 foot by 10 foot section. As their name cleverly implies, these caves have no light source; treat any creature in the lightless depths as having concealment (20% miss chance). The very air and darkness seem incredibly old, belonging to a time before time, before history, before life.

The Airless Depths

For every hour a living creature spends in the Lightless Depths (whether on dry ground or underwater), he must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 20 + 1 per previous check) or suffer 1 point of Constitution damage due to the lack of oxygen in the area. A character that loses Constitution in this fashion becomes dazed until he has regained at least one point of Constitution. Lost Constitution points may not be regained naturally until the creature is taken to the surface.

Flooded Areas

Areas **N4**, **N8-N9** and **N11-N14** are at least partially covered by deep saltwater. These flooded areas count as aquatic (saltwater) terrain, requiring characters moving through them to make successful Swim checks (DC 15) each round. Characters below the water are at risk from drowning, as described in Chapter Eight of the *DMG*. Due to the lack of illumination in **Area N**, there is no visibility beyond 20 feet while underwater, even with darkvision or an artificial light source.

Possessions: Heartstone—this is actually Saitara Sakhija's heart, twisted and turned to stone by Achrida. For the full story on Achrida and Saitara Sakhija, see pages 37 and 42 of *Tales of Mount Moru*. The properties of a heartstone are described under 'Night Hag' in Chapter One of the *MM*; if the deal with Saitara Sakhija has been made (see page 37 in *Tales of Mount Moru*), the heart also functions as an *efreeti bottle*.

Treasure

Achrida collects rare gems. Currently she carries a belt pouch containing an emerald (1,100 gp), a white opal (1,300 gp), a rich purple corundum (900 gp), a star ruby (1,450 gp), a canary diamond (4,500 gp), a jacinth (3,700 gp) and a rough long prism (13,000 gp); this is actually a *gem of brightness* (45 charges).

N3: Smothering Darkness

The darkness in this cave is so thick it is actually suffocating. In fact, you begin to find it difficult to breathe...

Fighting underwater is quite tricky; non-aquatic creatures suffer a -2 penalty on all attack rolls while underwater, plus they become off-balance unless they succeed on a Swim check (DC 15) each round. Off-balance creatures lose any Dexterity bonuses to their Armour Class and all attacks made against them receive a +2 bonus on the attack roll. Slashing or bludgeoning attacks made underwater do only half damage, with the exception of grappling damage, which is unaffected. Magic attacks deal normal damage, unless they are fire-based, in which case the caster must succeed at a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + spell level) or the effect automatically fails. Non-magical fire is of course ineffective underwater. Creatures inside the water have improved cover (+8 bonus to Armour Class, +4 bonus on Reflex saves) against attacks made from the surface, even if the attacker has a light source.

The Travelling Seal

Area N is affected by the Travelling Seal (see page 64), the curse placed by the Gods on the dungeons beneath Mount Moru. No dimensional travel is possible into, inside or out of this area; treat as a permanent *dimensional lock* effect (CL 50) in the entire level.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE LIGHTLESS DEPTHS

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area N**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering 1d4+4 forgotten ones, the statistics of which can be found in **N11**.

Areas labelled **N3** are so dark and stagnant the air itself has been actually infected by the darkness, creating a dangerous natural poison in the environment.

Traps (EL 13)

Any creature spending more than one round in these deadly caves is immediately affected by their deadly air (or lack thereof). A successful Spot check (DC 35), Survival check (DC 30) or Knowledge (dungeoneering) check (DC 25) detects the threat in time.

Smothering Darkness Cave: CR 13; natural trap; location trigger; timed reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in the cave); never miss; onset delay (1 round); smothering darkness (DC 18 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 Con/3d6 Con); Search check DC 30; no Disable Device check possible; no market price.

Lighting a fire in this cave reduces the effects of the trap, increasing its onset delay to 1 full minute.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

N4: The White Avatar

More than half of this cave is covered with deep, dark water; something big seems to move below the waves...

The area labelled **N4** is actually an underground saltwater lake, connecting with three separate, adjoining caves. The lake covers the whole northwest quarter of the Lightless Depths, also connecting with areas **N11** and **N12**, which belong to the Forgotten Ones. They give great ritual importance to the lake, as well as to the thing that lives below it...

Creatures (EL 14)

An immense, atavistic monster has lived in these caves since before human history began; Forgotten Ones (**N11**) call it the White Avatar, as it closely resembles their fallen god Sekolah. The creature swims under the three caves adjacent to the point labelled **N4**; it never comes to the surface but it gladly attacks anything that enters the water.

The White Avatar (Advanced Dire Shark): CR 14; Huge animal (aquatic); HD 32d8+162; hp 316; Init +8; Swim 60 ft; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +24; Grp +46; Atk +33 melee (2d8+15, bite); Full Atk +33 melee (2d8+15, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab, swallow whole; SQ keen scent; AL N; SV Fort +23, Ref +22, Will +20; Str 30, Dex 18, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +20, Spot +20, Swim +21; Alertness, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Snatch, Toughness (4), Weapon Focus (bite).

The White Avatar's special abilities are detailed in the 'Dire Shark' section under 'Dire Animals' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

The bottom of the White Avatar's lake, 150 feet under the surface, is home to large clutches of oysters, belonging to a magical, mutant strain. Every few decades, one of these oysters produces a single pearl. A pearl from the oysters of the White Avatar's lake can be used as a *pearl of power* (5th level spell). Finding an oyster with a pearl requires making a successful Search check (DC 35) underwater; only one of the oysters can have a pearl at any given time.

N5: The Earth Fathers

The ground of this chamber seems to emit an almost imperceptible murmur... as if the rock was alive.

This cave has been here for millennia, endless ages before recorded history. For each second of that time,

the elemental guardians of Mount Moru have lived here, forgotten by gods and mortals alike.

Creatures (EL 15)

When the Gods crafted Mount Moru, they made mighty elemental guardians to watch over the mountain's foundations. With time, these elemental guardians became lost creatures, forgotten below millions of tons of rock and millions of years. They have remained here, at the deepest geographical point in the mountain, having lost all memory of their own purpose or the world outside. The other inhabitants of **Area N** are barely aware of their existence, as they remain hidden behind the walls and under the ground. If an intruder from the surface should enter their cave, it would stir them up to action, causing them to strike madly at the nuisance...

The Earth Fathers (4 Elder Earth Elementals): hp 228 each; see the corresponding section under 'Elemental' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Despite their half-insane, aberrant behaviour, the guardians retain some of their old wisdom. They can be convinced to stop attacking with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 40); they know every inch of dry ground in **Area N** and may share what they know with a mortal that earned their trust. They can impart little historical information, however, as all they remember is a millennia-long sleep, plagued by nightmares and madness.

N6: The Three Seals

The moisture has created a coat of fungus, moss or some other kind of primal organic matter, discreetly and completely covering the insides of this cave.

The Nightwalker, demon of darkness and spawn of the Wyrn-Worm, was finally trapped beneath the cave at **N7** by three seals created by the Athan priests millennia ago. These three seals were hidden at three random caves, near **N7** but far enough from each other so they could never be brought together again. This is one of such caves. For a full story of the Nightwalker and the Three Seals, read page 17 of *The Dragon Stone*.

Creatures (EL 13)

When the seal was buried beneath this cave, its arcane power seeped into the earth, creating a primal life force in what had always been dead, barren rock. This force created a thin layer of organic matter that now covers the entire cave. With time, this primal matter acquired sentience, spawning a primitive monster as a means of natural defence. This monster is made of pure, primal organic matter, close to plants and fungi but even more archaic, despite the ability to move, feel – and kill. There are two of these creatures in each cave labelled **N6**.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

Primal Monster (2 Advanced Shambling Mounds): CR 11 each; Huge plant; HD 24d8+174; hp 282 each; Init -1; Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft; AC 21, touch 7, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +18; Grp +36; Atk +27 melee (3d6+10, slam); Full Atk +27 melee (3d6+10, 2 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA constrict 3d6+15, improved grab; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electrical damage, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to fire 10; AL N; SV Fort +23, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 30, Dex 8, Con 24, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Hide +2 (+10 in heavy vegetation or dark areas), Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Spot +11, Swim +18; Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Power Attack, Snatch, Toughness (2), Weapon Focus (slam).

The creatures' special abilities are detailed under 'Shambling Mound' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

If one of these creatures is killed, a 10 inch wide stone slab with an arcane seal appears inside its body. If all three stone slabs are assembled correctly, they magically fuse into a single stone seal, which can then be used to free the Nightwalker from its prison (**Area N7**).

N7: Tomb of the Nightwalker

Impossible as it may seem, this cave appears to have some carvings on the floor and a strange, inexplicably ominous pile of stones arranged against the far wall, indicating an intelligent people were here at some point in the far past...

This is where the Athan sages of old buried the Nightwalker during the Dark Strife (see page 17 of *The Dragon Stone*). The floor is covered with arcane symbols indicating danger; a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 40) reveals the symbols indicate a great evil is trapped in the chamber; a *read magic* spell reveals the message *Never Wake the Night*. There is an Athan burial mound against the far wall; the mound is 20 feet tall, which should give a clue as to the size of whatever is buried inside. Carved on the wall, just above the burial mound, is a 20 inch wide, 1 inch deep depression, of the exact shape and size of the assembled Stone Seal (**N6**). The indenture is exactly 25 feet above the ground, so it is not that easy to reach; the most straightforward means would be to succeed on a Climb check (DC 35).

Creatures (EL 16)

The Nightwalker, spawn of the Wyrm-Worm, scourge of Atha, was buried in this cave after its defeat at the hands of the Athan priest-sages. It still sleeps; entombed below the mound they made for it, surrounded by magical wards and trapped by a magical seal. If the magical seal is put on the corresponding space in the wall, the seal is broken and the

creature breaks free in an explosion of cracking sounds and black mist. It is impossible to free the nightwalker by digging away the burial mound; the stones are too heavy to move by mundane means. If the Nightwalker is freed, every living creature in **Area N** is alerted that something terrible has happened and instinctively prepares for a catastrophe. The Forgotten Ones (**N11**) may send a scouting patrol to investigate; the White Avatar (**N4**) and the Deep God (**N14**) become violently uneasy, perhaps killing a few of their subjects; Achrida (**N2**) cowers in her cave, knowing her cherished final doom is coming. The Nightwalker itself, meanwhile, celebrates its newfound freedom with maniacal, monstrous laughter and gets slaying any living thing in sight, after which it walks straight to **N2** to destroy Achrida, and then to **N15** to destroy the city of its enemies. The full history of the Nightwalker can be found in page 17 of *The Dragon Stone*.

Nightwalker: hp 178; see the corresponding section under 'Nightshade' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

The Nightwalker was buried with proper ceremony, including a ritual burial mask to cover its soul. This mask was made of pure gold; furthermore, it was enormous, easily the size of a tower shield. Freeing the Nightwalker breaks the mask in two; each half is still worth 3,900 gold pieces. The burial mound also contains the two weapons that defeated the Nightwalker the first time: Sunset, a bastard sword with hilt and blade of purest gold (a *sun blade*) and the severed horn of a unicorn. The sword comes in a scabbard of red velvet encrusted with gold and sun-shaped motifs in early Athan/Morudhain style; the full story and description of the Unicorn Horn is related in page 78 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

N8: The Sea Mothers

The water in this chamber seems to whisper and murmur softly, with a sound that is both soothing and disquieting...

This cave has been here for millennia, endless ages before recorded history. For each second of that time, the elemental guardians of Mount Moru have lived here, forgotten by gods and mortals alike.

Creatures (EL 15)

When the Gods crafted Mount Moru, they made mighty elemental guardians to watch over the mountain's foundations. With time, these elemental guardians became lost creatures, forgotten below endless ocean depths and millions of years. They have remained here, at the deepest geographical point in the mountain, having lost all memory of their own purpose or the world outside. The other inhabitants of **Area N** are barely aware of their existence, as they remain hidden beneath the waves, swimming through dark abysses out of living memory.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

If an intruder from the surface should enter their lair, however, it would stir them up to action, causing them to strike madly at the nuisance...

The Sea Mothers (4 Elder Water Elementals): hp 228 each; see the corresponding section under 'Elemental' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Despite their half-insane, aberrant behaviour, the guardians retain some of their old wisdom. They can be convinced to stop attacking with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 40); they have full knowledge of all the flooded areas in **Area N** and their contents; they could share what they know with a mortal that earned their trust. They can impart little historical information, however, as all they remember is a millennia-long sleep, plagued by nightmares and madness.

Nq: The Maelstrom

The sea is darker and more agitated here, as if the water itself was a great, sleeping monster...

The depth and strength of the currents here, combined with an undertow coming from the abyss below, has created a permanent vortex in the area, deadly to anyone attempting to swim through the area. However, it is the only direct route to **N13** without alerting the Forgotten Ones.

Traps (EL 16)

Any creature that enters the water here is sucked into the maelstrom, having to fight his way out as best he can. A trapped creature cannot move except to attempt to escape the maelstrom; other than that, he can act normally except he must succeed on a Concentration check (DC 10 + spell level) to cast a spell. To escape the vortex, a creature must succeed on a Swim check (DC 30). If the check fails, the creature remains caught in the vortex and suffers damage each round. Creatures caught in the whirlpool take a -4 penalty to Dexterity and a -2 penalty on attack rolls. In addition, a trapped character risks drowning after a number of rounds equal to twice his Constitution score. When this period has elapsed, the creature must succeed on a Constitution check (DC 10 + 1 per each previous check) every round or begin to drown. As soon as the check fails, the character falls unconscious (0 hp); in the following round, he drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, he dies.

Maelstrom Cave: CR 16; natural trap; location trigger; automatic reset; liquid; multiple targets (all creatures within a 30 foot wide cone); liquid (drowning risk); vortex (6d6 damage per round, DC 30 Reflex save avoids); no Search check or Disable Device check possible; no market price.

Nio: The Carcass

There is something large in this cave, something other than the walls or rocks. At first it seems like some kind of weird rock formation; then you realise it is bone – the bones of a tremendously big creature are lying in this cave...

This is where Aogarn, the son of Aedhaine, slew the monster that guarded the only entrance to the lost city of Archaneroth. The bones of the creature, a half-dragon twelve-headed hydra, still lie where they fell, in a heap of old and dry bones. The full story of Aogarn and his deeds can be found in page 76 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

A successful Search check (DC 25) reveals a Small (three foot tall) standing stone among the bones; it has some symbols and engravings. These engravings have a written meaning, as is common for Morudhain standing stones; strangely, they are not written in the Morudhain language, but in the ancient Athan Secret Tongue. A guide to understanding and using this language can be found in page 53 of the tome entitled *The Dragon Stone*.

If deciphered, the letters read *They Left Stones When They Died; I Do It When I Kill*.

Nii: The Forgotten Ones

You reach the end of a natural pier, before which lays a vast underground lake, extending into the darkness as far as the eye can see in all directions. For a few seconds, nothing stirs the dark surface of the waters; then, they emerge...

This great underground ocean actually connects with the bottom of the sea, many miles to the north of here. That is the cause for the pressure and lack of air in the area. The chamber connects with **N9** and **N12-N14**, though only by water.

Creatures (EL 14+)

This area is also home to the Forgotten Ones, a tribe of atavistic fish-men that have lived in these caves for many millennia. As the forebears of humanity crawled up to the surface and populated the earth, the Forgotten Ones remained behind, devolving to a fish-like state with the passing generations. Their stunted evolution and tainted blood have pushed the Forgotten Ones to the verge of extinction; here in Mount Moru, only a handful remain, all of them still devoted to dark, primal gods of the ocean depths.

The depths at areas **N11-N14** are teeming with Forgotten Ones; as soon as any intruders approach or enter the water, a squad of 1d4+4 Forgotten Ones swims up to meet them.

Forgotten Ones (1d4+4 Advanced Sahuagin Bbn7): CR 10 each; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 5d8+10 plus 7d12+14; hp 92 each; Init +7; Speed 40 ft., swim 70 ft; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19); Base Atk +12; Grp +15; Atk +16 melee (1d6+3, talon); Full Atk +16 melee (1d6+3, 2 talons) and +13 melee (1d4+1, bite); SA blood frenzy, rage 2/day, rake 1d6+1; SQ blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., freshwater sensitivity, light blindness, improved uncanny dodge, speak with sharks, trap sense +2, water dependent; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +8; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +12 (+16 with sharks), Hide +12 (+16 underwater), Listen +14 (+18 underwater), Profession (hunter) +12, Spot +13 (+17 underwater), Survival +12, Swim +19; Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armour, Improved Natural Attack, Multiattack^B, Weapon Focus (talon).

Rake: Attack bonus +15, damage 1d6+1. Sahuagin can also make two rake attacks during a full attack underwater.

The Forgotten Ones' other special abilities are detailed under 'Sahuagin' in chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Each Forgotten One carries pearl and coral ornaments worth a total of 1,000+3d100 gold pieces.

N12: Temple of the Deep God

At these dark depths it is hard to be sure, but there seems to some sort of underwater building here – it is either that, or else the rocks in this area are shaped like gigantic squids...

This crude shrine, carved in the likeness of a shark out of an undersea atoll, is where the Forgotten Ones perform their rites of worship for the Deep God. A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 35) reveals the sahuagin god is Sekolah, the White Shark; therefore, their worship of another god, while relegating their White Avatar of Sekolah to guard duty, is quite unusual. The shrine is little more besides the squid-faced altar; it has no inner chambers, except for a small niche where the priests keep their relics.

The temple is under the permanent effects of an *unhallow* spell (see 'Spell Descriptions' in Chapter Eleven of the *Player's Handbook*); affixed to this *unhallow* effect is a *silence* spell that affects only good-aligned divine spellcasters.

Creatures (EL 15)

The Deep Priests of the three primitive shamans of the Forgotten Ones, live and practice their rites at this altar. If surfacer intruders approach their realm, they swim up to meet them immediately, focused on preventing them

reaching the temple. If the White Avatar is still alive, they call it to fight for them; the White Avatar can arrive from its cave in 1d4 rounds.

Deep Priests (Advanced Sahuagin Clr9): CR 12 each; Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 5d8+10 plus 9d8+21; hp 94 each; Init +5; Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +11; Grp +14; Atk +14 melee (1d4+3, talon); Full Atk +14 melee (1d4+3, 2 talons) and +12 melee (1d4+1, bite); SA blood frenzy, rake 1d4+1, rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., freshwater sensitivity, light blindness, speak with sharks, water dependent; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +16; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12 (+16 casting defensively), Handle Animal +6 (+10 with sharks), Hide +6 (+10 underwater), Knowledge (religion) +11, Listen +10 (+14 underwater), Profession (hunter) +8, Spot +9 (+13 underwater), Survival +9, Swim +12; Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Multiattack^B, Toughness.

Rake: Attack bonus +14, damage 1d4+1. Sahuagin can also make two rake attacks during a full attack underwater.

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; save DC 14 + spell level): 0th—*guidance, mending, resistance* (3), *virtue*; 1st—*bane, cause fear*, curse water, divine favour, doom, magic stone*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, bull's strength, desecrate*, hold person, silence, summon monster II* (fiendish squid); 3rd—*animate dead*, blindness/deafness, contagion, dispel magic* (2); 4th—*control water, poison, unholy blight*, summon monster IV* (Large fiendish shark); 5th—*slay living*, summon monster V* (Huge fiendish shark).

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, melee touch attack kills single creature with 9d6 hp or less), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

The Priests' other special abilities are detailed under 'Sahuagin' in chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

The Priests keep a number of ancient relics in their temple, probably scavenged from nearby Athan ruins. They give religious value to all these relics. The stash includes an incredibly old ivory sceptre, probably of Athan origin but a bit primitive (135 gp); an obsidian short sword with some silver encrustations (200 gp); a silver and gold burial mask, with the moon carved on its cheeks (460 gp); a great pearl necklace (1,050 gp); and a single, disembodied hand made of pure jade (600 gp), obviously broken off from a larger statue; the hand is not quite humanoid so the nature of the statue is a mystery. In addition, they have a small

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(three foot tall), obscenely carved statue of a grotesque human-squid hybrid. The thing is made of some kind of exotic green stone (5,500 gp); it wields a jewelled trident made of the same material, which can easily be detached from the statue; this is actually a *trident of fish command* for Small creatures. It is likely the statue and trident are the work of the Forgotten Ones' more human-like ancestors, though it is impossible to know for sure.

N13: Manusach

As you approach the ghostly green light, you see it emanates from patches of strange glowing fungi, which grow on the walls of an underwater cave. Some crude rock arrangements and carvings hint at the presence of a primitive, yet intelligent creature in the area.

This cave and the lake beyond it (**Area N14**) are taboo for the Forgotten Ones; the cave is full of primitive warding symbols, such as little stone mounds and complex, unpleasant wall and floor signs; for the Forgotten Ones, it is the border of their realm, the entrance to Hell – and their God's abode.

Creatures (EL 15)

This is the cave of Manusach, the high priest of the Forgotten Ones, the greatest of their tribe. Manusach is a sahuagin as degenerate and inhuman as his brethren, yet much stronger and wiser than them. He remembers the times when his race split from humanity, not from having actually been alive at the time but by tapping into his race's collective memory. He knows how to speak with the denizens of the depths and has faced demons from both the surface and the deep without flinching. He is the closest the Forgotten Ones have to a leader, though he does not actually lead them – his role is merely that of spokesman for the Deep God, with which he is the only Forgotten One to keep close contact and communication. This constant contact with primal, unbridled chaos has forever shattered Manusach's sanity, though not his wits or malice. Manusach challenges any living creature, sahuagin or otherwise, that approaches his cave; he attacks for the slightest insult or provocation.

Manusach, Leader of the Forgotten Ones (Advanced Sahuagin Clr9/Blk1): CR 15; Large monstrous humanoid (aquatic); HD 10d8+50 plus 9d8+45 plus 1d10+5; hp 191; Init +5; Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft; AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +17; Grp +28; Atk +28* melee (1d6+12*, talon); Full Atk +28* melee (1d6+12*, 2 talons) and +26* melee (1d6+8*, bite); SA blood frenzy, rake 1d6+8*, rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ aura of evil, blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*, freshwater sensitivity, light blindness, poison use, speak with sharks, water dependent; AL LE; SV Fort +18, Ref +11, Will +19; Str 24, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13 (+17 casting defensively), Handle Animal +8 (+12 with sharks), Hide

+8 (+12 underwater), Intimidate +4, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +11 (+15 underwater), Profession (hunter) +8, Spot +11 (+15 underwater), Survival +10, Swim +13; Cleave, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Multiattack^B, Power Attack.

*Manusach's attack and damage bonuses already include his *amulet of mighty fists*.

Rake: Attack bonus +28, damage 1d6+8. Sahuagin can also make two rake attacks during a full attack underwater. The attack and damage bonuses include Manusach's *amulet of mighty fists*.

Blackguard Spells Prepared (1; save DC 14 + spell level): 1st—*corrupt weapon*.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; save DC 14 + spell level): 0th—*guidance, mending, resistance* (3), *virtue*; 1st—*bane, cause fear**, *curse water, divine favour, doom, magic stone*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, bull's strength, desecrate**, *hold person, silence, summon monster II* (fiendish squid); 3rd—*animate dead**, *blindness/deafness, contagion, dispel magic* (2); 4th—*control water, poison, unholy blight**, *summon monster IV* (Large fiendish shark); 5th—*slay living**, *summon monster V* (Huge fiendish shark).

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, melee touch attack kills single creature with 9d6 hp or less), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Manusach's other special abilities are detailed under 'Sahuagin' in chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

Manusach wears a pearl necklace worth 6,600 gold pieces and an amulet made of a shark's fang, carved with runes (an *amulet of mighty fists* +5).

N14: The Deep God

This cave surely connects to the deepest ocean in the world, as it continues on and on, deeper and deeper...

The only way to explore this area is by securing some long-term means of safe underwater travel, as it is an insanely deep chasm, 8,000 feet beneath the surface (roughly three straight hours of swimming). No living humanoid has ever entered this chasm except as a captive to the Deep God.

Creatures (EL 17+)

This fathomless chasm is the home of the abyssal monster that usurped the Forgotten Ones' worship, wresting their devotion from the cult of Sekolah. Forgotten Ones call it simply the Deep God; its real name is reputed to be so

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unnatural, so awful as to be impossible to utter or listen to. The Deep God is a being of unfathomable power and unknown purpose, whose lair miles beneath the waves is filled with Forgotten Ones, enslaved and overwhelmed by their god's power. The enslaved sahuagin actually believe they have arrived at an afterlife in their God's hell, which is perfectly convenient for the evil creature to keep them subjugated. If the Deep God senses any free, living creatures roaming its domains, it attacks immediately with all the fury of an eon-old dark deity.

The Deep God (Advanced Kraken): CR 17; Colossal magical beast (aquatic); HD 33d10+399; hp 580; Init +4; Spd swim 20 ft; AC 22, touch 2, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +33; Grp +66; Atk +42 melee (3d8+17/19-20, tentacle); Full Atk +42 melee (3d8+17/ 19-20, 2 tentacles) and +37 melee (2d6+8, 6 arms) and +37 melee (4d6+8, bite); Space/Reach 30 ft./20 ft. (80 ft. with tentacle, 40 ft. with arm); SA constrict 3d8+17 or 1d8+8, improved grab, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., ink cloud, jet, low-light vision, spell-like abilities; AL NE; SV Fort +30, Ref +18, Will +18; Str 44, Dex 10, Con 34, Int 21, Wis 20, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +33, Diplomacy +7, Hide +10, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (geography) +26, Knowledge (nature) +26, Listen +39, Search +37, Sense Motive +26, Spot +39, Survival +5 (+7 following tracks), Swim +34, Use Magic Device +25; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Improved Critical (tentacle), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armour, Improved Natural Attack (arm), Improved Natural Attack (tentacle), Improved Trip, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Hide), Toughness.

The Deep God's special abilities are detailed under 'Kraken' in chapter One of the *MM*.

The Deep God never swims to the surface; any fight against it must follow the rules for underwater combat detailed in page 99.

Besides the Deep God, there are also 2d6 sahuagin slaves at all times. They truly believe they are in their God's Hell; they do not react against intruders, nor do they rebel against their master. The Deep God never sends its sahuagin slaves against intruders, as commanding them to fight would harm the deception that they are serving a sentence in the afterlife. Besides, he rightly believes itself to be capable of dealing with almost any threat. These sahuagin slaves have the statistics of typical members of their race, detailed under 'Sahuagin' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Treasure

The Deep God keeps an immense treasure room, containing the result of many centuries of plundering all over the ocean. The treasure room is hidden among the cracks and crevices of the Deep God's abyss (Search check DC 40). The treasure includes 12,300 gold pieces

and 1,150 platinum pieces, half-scattered in the cave floor, half-contained inside 5 or 6 ancient, shattered coffers. This money comes from the most diverse sources and currencies, mostly ancient Athan coin. Amidst this sea of money, there are two rubies (1,250 gp each), a silver spyglass inlaid with pearls (2,100 gp), a silver and gold goblet with dragon-shaped handles (2,050 gp), an aquamarine (400 gp), a great chest of jewelled gold (11,300 gp), 2 *potions of water breathing*, an adamantine shield with a trident symbol painted in gold, 3 black pearls (550 gp each), a masterwork golden trumpet (4,000), four pieces of coral (roughly 120 gp each), a heavy chain with a platinum charm (actually a *necklace of adaptation*), a dull and featureless lead sceptre (Mh the One; see below), a gold candle sconce carved in the likeness of a shark's face (800 gp), a crystal phial containing a single drop of quicksilver (50 gp), a luxurious cloth-of-gold Athan headdress (350 gp), 3 jaspers (50 gp each), 2 sard gems (30 gp each), a silver necklace with aqua sapphires (4,000 gp), a suit of mithral chainmail, a zircon (75 gp), a silk bag (50 gp) containing 6 irregular pearls (15 gp each), 2 great diamonds (7,000 gp each) and a rune-carved greataxe that has not rusted even after centuries at the bottom of the sea (+1 *anarchic greataxe*).

Mh The One: This *rod of cancellation* is actually an intelligent item; AL N; Int14, Wis 10, Cha 14; Speech (Common, Aquan, Draconic), 120 ft. vision and hearing; Ego score 6.

Lesser Powers: *Detect magic* at will, *locate object* 3/day.

Personality: Mh the One is a somewhat deranged item, convinced it is the only magic item in the universe and willing to prove it by destroying any other magic item it finds. Although its ego rarely allows Mh to force its views onto its owner, it takes whatever opportunity it has to express its feelings on the subject.

Strong abjuration; CL 17th; Craft Rod; *Mage's disjunction*; Price 24, 800 gp.

N15: The Lost Path

No description or physical indication marks the access to the lost city of Archaneroth, a passage hidden outside time and space. The passage leads east to **Area O**; however, it is *not* located in the present world, being in fact hidden in the same otherworldly prison where the city itself was trapped by the Gods' Curse. Therefore, **Area N15** is effectively invisible, as it technically does not even exist, and is inaccessible, as the Travelling Passage (see page 64) prevents any means of dimensional transportation.

For more details on how to enter **N15** (and thus Archaneroth), see page 78 of the book known as *Tales of Mount Moru*. Once discovered, the tunnel leads to Archaneroth (**Area O1**) after a half-hour underground walk.

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This is the end of the journey; the city of the ancient dragon worshippers that the Gods banished from the Mortal Plane and buried in an otherworldly prison under Mount Moru. Virtually nobody outside Mount Moru knows Archaneroth even exists, much less its location or the way in.

The Damned City includes **Area O**, which is Archaneroth proper, and **Area P**, which is the infernal fortress of Hellfast, created to watch over the ruins of Archaneroth and ensure its evil never entered the Mortal Plane again.

Areas O1-O14: Archaneroth

This is the city of Archaneroth, once the capital of the Athan empire; now, all that remains is a ruined court, buried inside an immense cave. This surviving court includes Archaneroth's palace of government, outer temple, main plaza, fountain and a few other historical sites, as well as the Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord (**Areas O15-O27**).

The only way to reach the City of Archaneroth is via the lost tunnel at **N15**, hidden outside reality through the same curse that trapped the city itself. For more details on how to enter the Damned City, see page 79 in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

O1: The Archaneroth Entrance

You arrive at a small circular courtyard, with ancient stone walls to the left and right and two wide passages

leading into the darkness. Eight standing stones flank the courtyard. There are some vague carvings on the floor and the standing stones ...

This seems to be the entrance to the city of Archaneroth; a 30-foot wide circular court surrounded by Morudhain-style standing stones (which should be odd in an Athan ruin site). A successful Spot check (DC 30) reveals the carvings on the ground are the Dragon Lord's holy symbol. Each standing stone has some carvings, though these are surprisingly pristine and well preserved. The carvings on each standing stone are Athan solar signs and arcane symbols referring to a single hour of the day; these are respectively predawn, dawn, morning, afternoon, evening, stars, moon and deep night. Each of the stones has also a smaller bas-relief of a crying dragon; each of these dragons is depicted with a single tear falling from its eye.

The western exit from the courtyard leads back to **Area N15**; the eastern exit leads to a flight of wide stone stairs and to the ruins of Archaneroth proper.

O2: The Streets of Archaneroth

You enter what seem to be the remains of an underground city; a vast expanse of ruined buildings inside a great underground cave. This must have been a great and splendid city once; now the 'streets' have been dilapidated to little more than square piles of rock.

This is not exactly a dungeon area but instead comprises all of Archaneroth's 'streets'; the open cave areas between the buildings.

THE DAMNED CITY AS A DUNGEON

Archaneroth is mostly an open space; a great cave about 150 feet wide and 100 feet high. In this space stand several ruined stone buildings, with battered masonry walls. Where the walls still stand, they have hardness 8, a break DC of 35 and 90 hit points per 10 foot by 10 foot section; however, most of them are at least partially ruined, with huge gaps through which a man-sized creature can easily pass. These walls have very few complete 10 foot by 10 foot sections and therefore count as having no hit points, hardness or break DC. Only those walls that are complete should have full statistics.

Doors in **Areas O1-O14** are all made of stone, with hardness 8, break DC 28 and 60 hit points. None of

them remain locked, as time has taken its toll on their mechanisms.

The cave has no natural light sources; all creatures and objects in the area have concealment (20% miss chance).

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE DAMNED CITY

The chance to have a hostile encounter in the Damned city is much greater than that at other dungeon areas, due to the guard squads Aogarn has set up to watch the streets of 'his' city. For every ten minutes a group of characters spends exploring the open city areas (labelled **Area O2**), or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 50% chance of encountering a hostile creature; see **O2** for more details.

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Creatures (Average EL 15)

Aogarn (see **O25**) has dispatched three guard teams to patrol the streets of Archaneroth, partly to make sure no dangerous creatures disturb his search and partly to reinforce his feeling that he controls the city now. These guards cross the streets at their leisure, camping inside the ruined buildings and generally having a good time. For every 10 minutes a group of characters spends exploring **Area O2** (that is, the city itself), or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 50% chance of encountering 1d6+1 of Aogarn's Dragon Guards.

Dragon Guards (1d6+1, Male Human Ftr7/Blk4): CR 11; Medium humanoid; HD 7d10+14 plus 4d10+8; hp 82; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +11; Grp +14; Atk +16 melee (1d10+6/17-20, dragon guard sword) or +12 ranged (1d10+1/19-20, dragon guard crossbow); Full Atk +16/+10/+6 melee (1d10+6/17-20, dragon guard sword) or +12/+7/+2 ranged (1d10+1/19-20, dragon guard crossbow); AL NE; SA command undead, dark blessing, *detect good*, poison use, smite good 1/day, sneak attack +1d6, spells; SQ aura of despair, aura of evil; SV Fort +11, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +1, Spot +7; Alertness, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialisation (bastard sword).

Possessions: Dragon guard sword (treat as +1 *bastard sword*), dragon guard plate (treat as +1 *full plate*), dragon guard crossbow (treat as +1 *heavy crossbow*), dragon guard shield (treat as +1 *heavy steel shield*), holy symbol of the Dragon Lord, case with 10 crossbow bolts, *everburning torch*, 3d20 platinum pieces.

Spells Prepared (2/1; save DC 11 + spell level): 1st—*corrupt weapon* (2); 2nd—*bull's strength*.

The dragon guards' other special abilities are described in the Blackguard section under 'Prestige Classes' in Chapter Six of the *DMG*.

The wizard Aogarn (**O25**) is constantly scrying on his dragon guards via his *crystal ball*, so it can be safely assumed he sees anything they see.

O3: The Ancient Portal

The frontispiece of this half-buried building can still be seen coming out of the rubble. Its double stone doors must have been a great, imposing entrance once; now they are just run-down stone slabs amidst the debris. A monstrous creature, apparently a cross between a woman, a demon and a winged lion, looks at you from atop the entrance.

During Archaneroth's zenith, this was a very important building; it was a temple-office, whose priests were in charge of handling travel through the sacred portal at **O13**. There is a sliding stone panel on the south wall at **O3a**; finding the switch that opens it requires a successful Search check (DC 40). The panel opens the access to **Area O13**. Only the priests that ran the temple knew of the switch; now its location is all but unknown.

Creatures (EL 16)

Sazabel, a demoness appointed by the gods as the guardian of Archaneroth, chose the Ancient Portal as her watch post. Her task consisted of remaining at the Ancient Portal, watching any living creature that might by happenstance succeed at breaching the Travelling Seal and entering the city. If Sazabel met intruders, she was to eat them without contemplation; however, her love for riddles got the best of her and she swore she would allow passage to anyone that beat her at an intelligence test; that proved her undoing. She had remained immobile for centuries at her watch post, waiting for something interesting to happen, until a few days ago, when Aogarn arrived to Archaneroth. The young wizard talked Sazabel into allowing him to pass by beating her at a riddle contest; now Sazabel must let Aogarn's men roam the city as they will, without moving from her place. However, nothing in the deal prevented Sazabel from revealing Aogarn's presence to a third party; she would be happy to see the defeat of the one that tricked her, so she will gladly cooperate with anyone looking for the wizard, provided they earn her respect. A character wishing to earn Sazabel's respect must defeat her, either physically or mentally; she proposes a chess game, as riddles proved a bad idea the previous time. If defeated, Sazabel cooperates with whatever information she has. Sazabel does not know Aogarn's goals or even his name – he was quite wary of letting her know that – but she can talk about his appearance, his men and the time he has spent in the area. She also knows Areas **O1-**

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O14 intimately but she will not reveal anything about them except in dire circumstances.

Sazabel, the Guardian of Archaneroth (Advanced Half-Fiend Gynosphinx): CR 16; Huge outsider; HD 18d10+90; hp 189; Init +5; Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +18; Grp +38; Atk +28 melee (1d8+12, claw); Full Atk +28 melee (1d8+12, 2 claws) and +23 melee (2d6+6, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA pounce, rake 1d8+6, smite good, spell-like abilities; SQ DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison, low-light vision, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electrical 10 and fire 10, SR 28; AL LE; SV Fort +16, Ref +12, Will +12; Str 34, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 26, Wis 18, Cha 26.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +29, Concentration +26 (+30 casting defensively), Diplomacy +33, Disguise +29(+31 acting), Intimidate +31, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +29, Knowledge (games) +29, Knowledge (history) +29, Knowledge (religion) +29, Listen +27, Search +29, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +31, Spot +27, Survival +4 (+6 underground), Use Magic Device +29 (+31 involving scrolls); Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Negotiator, Power Attack, Snatch.

Sazabel's natural attacks count as magic for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Pounce: Sazabel can take a full attack action, including two rake attacks, after a charge.

Rake: Attack bonus +28, damage 1d8+6.

Smite Good: Once per day, Sazabel may make a single melee attack with a +18 bonus to damage against a good-aligned foe.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, darkness, detect magic, poison* (DC 22), *read magic, see invisibility, unholy aura* (DC 26); 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 25), *comprehend languages, contagion* (DC 22), *desecrate, dispel magic, horrid wilting* (DC 26), *legend lore, locate object, remove curse, summon monster IX* (bebilyth only), *unhallow* (DC 23), *unholy blight* (DC 22); 1/week—*symbol of death, symbol of fear, symbol of insanity, symbol of pain, symbol of persuasion, symbol of sleep, symbol of stunning*. Caster level 18th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Treasure

Sazabel has quite a stash, accumulated from centuries of plundering the damned city; she keeps it hidden under the rubble near her watch post (Search check DC 35). Her cache includes the entire treasury of Archaneroth, ascending to nearly 15,000 gold pieces of ancient Athan mint, distributed among seven locked metal chests (Open

Lock DC 40). The first of these chests also contains 2 star rubies (1,300 gp each), 5 pieces of blue quartz (15 gp each), 4 carnelians (65 gp each), a sardonyx (50 gp) a chrisoberyl (135 gp), 3 red spinels (120 gp each), 2 alexandrites (650 gp each) and an ancient Athan ankh made of pure gold (1,000 gp). The second chest contains Two Athan bronze statuettes (450 gp each) and an adamantite guisarme used in special military ceremonies. The third chest contains seven Athan burial masks, all crafted in jewelled silver (1,150 gp each) and a golden orb representing Athan royalty (6,000 gp). The fifth chest is a treasure in itself, with precious stones on the lid and hinges (8,000 gp). Finally, the sixth chest contains a heavy mithral shield and two rings used by the high-ranking Athan military (*rings of protection* +3).

O4: Outer Temple Entrance

You come to another once-majestic, ramshackle stone building. This one seems to be a religious centre of some sort, judging from the size and the many godlike – or demonic – effigies in the frontispiece. The symbol of the coiling dragon can be guessed in many of the decorations. The relatively small door looks too old to serve as a barrier anymore, much less an ornament. Upon closer inspection, you discover what at first seemed to be great stone columns on both sides of the entrance are actually two great iron statues; surely they used to represent Athan warriors, though now rust has all but wiped out their features.

This used to be the antechamber to the Athans' Outer Temple, full of colour and magnificence; currently it is no more than a dark, stifling cave. The stone door leading to it is half open and off its hinges; the larger inner door (leading to **O9**) is still complete and closed, though not locked.

Creatures (EL 15)

The two rusted statues on both sides of the entrance are actually iron golems, still functional and deadly despite the apparent coat of rust covering their frames. These golems are programmed to attack anyone not wearing the dragon lord's holy symbol somewhere visible on his person; Aogarn researched and knew this, so he was able to enter the Outer Temple unmolested; unaware intruders could be less lucky.

Iron Golems (2): hp 129 each; see the corresponding section under 'Golem' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

If the golems attack, they make enough noise and damage to attract the attention of the other cave denizens, particularly two groups of dragon guards (see **Area O2**) and Chameri the Steward (**O9**). The dragon guards may help the golems against the intruders, or they might decide to run inside the Lost Temple (**Areas O15-O27**) to warn Aogarn. If Sazabel (**O3**) was not already aware of the

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presence of intruders, she zooms to the spot to help the golems; Ravahnasa Singh (O5) would wait the battle out and then decide depending on the outcome.

O5: The Fountain

You come to what appears to be an ancient, derelict fountain. Of course there is no water anywhere; the eight columns surrounding the fountain are devoid of any statue or ornament. Only the central column retains some decoration, though it is as dilapidated as the rest of the city. The strange thing is, what appears to be an armoured man is standing guard besides the fountain ...

This used to be a city fountain, having dried and filled with dust and debris centuries ago.

Creatures (EL 17)

The dragon guard at the fountain is actually Ravahnasa Singh, an evil spirit from the lower planes, thus disguised to avoid trouble with Aogarn and his men. Centuries ago, Ravahnasa managed to escape his own plane through the Hellfast fortress (see **Area P**) and came to Archaneroth, hoping to find the freedom of the mortal world and encountering nothing but the Travelling Seal (see page 64) and another prison. He has spent a few centuries hiding at this fountain, researching as much as he can about the Damned City; with his intelligence and resources, he has come to deduce or discover almost everything there is to know about Ancient Archaneroth, its history and its current state. It could be said Ravahnasa Singh is the greatest living authority on the subject of Archaneroth and the ancient Athan civilisation. He is also quite aware of Aogarn and his quest, as well as of the circumstances that made him what he is now. So far Ravahnasa has successfully hidden from Aogarn by assuming the shape of one of his dragon guards; soon, however, Aogarn will get what he is looking for and become much more dangerous, forcing Ravahnasa to make a decision regarding him. Of course, having all this information does not mean Ravahnasa Singh is in any hurry to share it, though a clever talker might get a few titbits – if Ravahnasa does not decide to kill him first. For full details on Ravahnasa Singh and what he has to say, refer to page 79 in the book known as *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Ravahnasa Singh (male rakshasa Sor7): hp 91; see page 127 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

O6: Haunted Square

Ruined buildings surround this ancient courtyard; it seems like a normal ruined plaza, except you could swear the pebbles and dust roll softly as if moved by an unnatural wind...

This ancient Athan courtyard used to be a place for the Athans to gather and attend things such as street masses and public executions. So many innocents died in this

square, so many atrocities were committed here, that the place became haunted, even before – and beyond – the curse that trapped the city of Archaneroth.

The courtyard is affected by an *unhallow* spell (see ‘Spell Descriptions’ in Chapter Eleven of the *Player’s Handbook*), with an affixed *dispel magic* effect that affects any arcane spellcaster.

For some unknown reason, this was the site chosen for the tomb of Eth Samahn, the High Priest of Archaneroth. Finding the loose slab leading to the tomb requires a successful Search check (DC 40). If a character moves the slab, he is the target of a *glyph of warding* with a *bestow curse* effect; in addition, he must face the ghost of the High Priest (see **Creatures**, below). The *glyph* is invisible but, when activated, it clearly reads *Eth Samahn – High Priest of Archaneroth* in the Athan Secret Tongue. A guide to understanding the Secret Tongue may be found in page 53 of *The Dragon Stone*.

Creatures (EL 16)

Eth Samahn, the High Priest of Archaneroth, was buried here after he died trying to prevent the great cataclysm that devoured Archaneroth and brought the Curse of the Gods upon the city. He came to haunt this place, as a retribution for the hundreds of innocents he sacrificed in this very square. If his tomb is opened or tampered with in any fashion, Eth Samahn awakes and immediately manifests in the plaza again, angrily looking for the defilers that dared touch his resting place.

Eth Samahn, High Priest of Archaneroth (Ghost, Male Human Clr13/Blk1): CR 16; Medium undead; HD 14d12; hp 91; Init +0; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 13 or 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +10; Grp +11; Atk +10 melee or +11 melee against ethereal foes (1d6 or 1d6+1 against ethereal foes, incorporeal touch) or +12 melee (1d8+2, sacrificial sceptre) or +10 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +10 melee or +11 melee against ethereal foes (1d6 or 1d6+1 against ethereal foes, incorporeal touch) or +13/+8 melee (1d8+2, sacrificial sceptre) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA frightful moan, manifestation, rebuke undead 5/day, spells, telekinesis; SQ aura of evil, *detect good*, incorporeal traits, poison use, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +14; Str 13, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13 (+17 casting defensively); Diplomacy +10, Hide +6, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +12, Search +9, Spellcraft +11, Spot +12; Cleave, Combat Casting, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Quicken Spell.

Blackguard Spells Prepared (1; save DC 14 + spell level):
1st—*corrupt weapon*.

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Cleric Spells Prepared (6/6+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/2+1/1+1; save DC 14 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic* (2), *guidance* (2), *mending*, *resistance*; 1st—*bane*, *cause fear*, *cause fear**, *command*, *divine favour*, *doom*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*death knell**, *desecrate*, *enthral*, *hold person*, *shatter*, *silence*, *spiritual weapon*; 3rd—*animate dead**, *bestow curse*, *dispel magic* (2), *glyph of warding*, *speak with dead*; 4th—*greater magic weapon* (2), *divine power* (3), *unholy blight**; 5th—*greater command*, *slay living**, *unhallow*; 6th—*create undead**, *death knell* (quickened), *harm*; 7th—*destruction**, *dispel magic* (quickened).
*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, melee touch attack kills single creature with 13d6 hp or less), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: +1 full plate armour, +1 heavy steel shield, sacrificial sceptre (treat as +1 *unholy morningstar*), light crossbow, case with 10 bolts, silver holy symbol of the Dragon Lord.

Eth Samahn's frightful moan, manifestation, telekinesis and rejuvenation special abilities are detailed under 'Ghost' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC for his frightful moan ability is 20.

Eth Samahn's blackguard special abilities are described in the Blackguard section under 'Prestige Classes' in Chapter Six of the *DMG*.

Treasure

Eth Samahn's physical body, buried in a stone slab under the plaza, has the real, material versions of all of his listed possessions, plus three golden bracelets (1,150 gp each), a golden holy symbol of the Dragon Lord (500 gp) and a jewelled torc (4,000 gp). In addition, Eth Samahn was buried with a small crystal sphere. This sphere is a key to the Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord, buried with him so that his spirit could still enter the sacred place; the key opens the door to **Area O15**. Aogarm destroyed all the other keys, so as to ensure no one would follow him inside the Lost Temple; he missed this one, however, as he did not know the location of Eth Samahn's tomb.

O7: Abbazel's Memorial

This small court is dominated by a great pillar of stone, with some carvings whose meaning is hard to make out; they seem to represent a great creature... a great something...

This is the memorial for Abbazel the Mace of Ruin, the demon that smote Archaneroth with Hell's vengeance and slaughtered the city. The memorial was not built by the Athans; instead, it spontaneously emerged after Abbazel's death at the hands of the Athan priests. The great stone



pillar at the centre of the courtyard features a bas-relief of the demon Abbazel himself; the carving is eroded and worn out but the fiend's features can still be made out in the stone surface.

Creatures (EL 17)

The stone image 'representing' Abbazel is actually the petrified body of the demon himself, trapped in stone forever after he died destroying Archaneroth. The full story of Abbazel and his death is told in page 80 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

If the Travelling Seal (see **Area O25**) is ever broken, Abbazel comes to life again, waking up and breaking away from the stone in his full flesh-and-blood power. Once awakened, Abbazel will not stop until he has destroyed Archaneroth and every living thing inside it again. The full statistics of Abbazel can be found in page 118 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Abbazel, The Mace of Ruin: hp 270; see *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 118.

O8: Athan Tomb

You enter an Athan-style burial chamber, with strange hieroglyphs carved on the walls and an empty, overturned coffin on the stone floor. The walls, floor and ceiling are slowly falling apart from disrepair. Whether the coffin was opened and overturned from within or without, you cannot be sure.

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Areas marked 'O8' are simply those Athan tombs that have no special features – or used to have special features and have already been ransacked, whether by Aogarn (O25), Ravahnasa Singh (O5), Sazabel (O3) or someone else. A successful Search check (DC 30) confirms someone indeed entered the chamber and stole its treasures; in some cases it also reveals a deactivated trap or a destroyed mummy. Most of these chambers have more than one empty coffin; all of them have at least one.

Oq: Chameri, the City Steward

This is a long stone chamber, the far section of which has been completely buried in rubble. There are rickety stone doors on either side and strange, half-erased marks on both the walls and floor. An apparently fresh corpse lies on the chamber floor.

This used to be the main room of the Archanerth Outer Temple, a place of splendour and religious ecstasy. Now, it is nothing but a gloomy, empty, sinister stone room. The doors on the north and south walls lead to some priests' tombs; the large door at the west leads to O4.

Creatures (EL 16)

The body in the middle of the chamber is Chameri, the City's undead steward. He was spared the fate of the other Athan priests and nobles thanks to his fiendish blood; now he is an undead servant to the same demonic host that destroyed his city. He tried to stop Aogarn but was defeated and staked through the heart; if the stake is removed, he rises back to life. The statistics, background and roleplaying notes for Chameri can be found on pages 80 and 124 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Chameri, the City Steward: hp 78; see page 124 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

O10: Half-Buried Tomb

You enter an ancient Athan burial chamber, its right half completely buried by a mountain of rubble; it is as if the cave was slowly making its way through the tomb walls. A few coffins can be seen scattered about the room; some of them are partially or completely buried under the rubble. There is a closed, well-preserved stone door on the left wall.

This was a burial chamber for the Athan priests that served at the Outer Temple. There are four stone sarcophagi in the room; three of these, one of them half-buried under the rubble, were sacked long ago; the fourth coffin, however, remains closed, as the tons of rubble above it make it impossible to move.

The door to the west (leading into O11) is closed and locked, contrary to all other doors in the city. There is an ankh carved on the door, with an inscription in Draconic that reads *Agha, Founder of the Temple and Son of the Scorpion*.

Stone Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 8; 60 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 40; Break DC 28.

It is possible to free the buried coffin by moving the rubble; a single Medium character working with his hands may dig out the coffin in a total amount of hours equal to 2d6 – the character's Strength modifier (minimum of 1 hour). Halve the amount of time required if the adequate tools are used, such as picks and shovels; also, for each character helping out beyond the first, reduce the time required by one additional hour, always to a minimum of one hour of work. It requires two Small characters to make the work of a Medium one. No more than four characters may work on unearthing the coffin at the same time.

Moving the coffin entails a grave danger: it is not possible to move it by mundane means without causing the entire room to collapse (see below). A successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) check (DC 15) or Survival check (DC 20) detects this; a dwarf notices it automatically.

Natural Hazard (EL 16)

Moving the buried coffin is possible, though it inevitably causes the room to collapse, completely burying everyone and everything inside rooms O4, O9, O10 and the two O8 rooms inside the Outer Temple. Area O11 remains intact, though it becomes inaccessible due to the tons of rock burying it. When the cave-in happens, all living creatures in the listed chambers suffer 14d6 points of crushing damage, with no saving throw allowed (there is nowhere to run to). A creature that fails its save is buried and takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage each minute; if the creature becomes unconscious, it must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) each minute or suffer 1d6 points of lethal damage until it dies. A buried character may not dig free by mundane means, since the cave-in leaves no free space to break to. After the landslide, all areas inside the Outer Temple become inaccessible unless some magical means to remove the rubble is employed.

Treasure

The unopened coffin contains the mummified remains of Isam Ithagan, one of the most important priests of Archanerth and the predecessor of Eth Samahn (O6). The body of Isam was buried with golden bracelets, necklaces and other jewellery worth a total of 6,500 gold pieces; his golden burial mask is inlaid with tourmalines (3,200 gp). Isam's golden sceptre is actually a *metamagic rod (quicken, lesser)* and one of his necklaces is in fact an *amulet of health +4*.

O11: The Founder's Tomb

You enter yet another Athan burial chamber, this one strangely preserved even through the ages. There is only one sarcophagus inside the chamber; two green-flame torches still burn on the left and right walls, illuminating the entire chamber. The sarcophagus represents a man with arms crossed, his face a mask of wisdom and serenity.

This room is the burial chamber of Agha, founder of the Outer Temple of Archaneroth. He died and was buried hundreds of years before the cataclysm that destroyed the City and the Gods' curse. There are *everburning torches* on the north and south walls.

Creatures (EL 16)

Agha is fully undead, though he has not awakened or moved from this site since his death millennia ago. If the lid of his coffin is opened, he acts disoriented at first, asking if he is dead, what he is doing here and what became of his city. After a few rounds of this mild confusion, he gets his bearings and attacks, intent on destroying all intruders to his temple and his city.

Agha, Founder of the Outer Temple of Archaneroth (Mummy, 11th Level Cleric): CR 16; Medium undead; HD 8d12+3 plus 11d8; hp 104; Init +4; Speed 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +12; Grp +19; Atk +19 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot, slam); Full Atk +19 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot, slam); SA despair, mummy rot, rebuke undead 5/day, spells; SQ damage reduction 5/-, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, vulnerability to fire; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +20¹; Str 24, Dex 10, Con -, Int 8, Wis 20¹, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7 (+11 casting defensively), Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Spot +12; Ability Focus (mummy rot), Alertness, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Toughness.

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/4+1/3+1/2+1/1+1; base DC = 15¹ + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, guidance* (2), *mending, resistance* (2); 1st—*bane, cause fear**, *command* (2), *doom, shield of faith*; 2nd—*death knell**, *enthral, hold person, shatter, silence*; 3rd—*animate dead, bestow curse, dispel magic**, *dispel magic* (2); 4th—*death ward**, *divine power* (2), *spell immunity*; 5th—*flame strike, insect plague, slay living**; 6th—*blade barrier, create undead**.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, melee touch attack kills single creature with 11d6 hp or less), Magic (may use arcane magic items as a 5th level wizard).

¹*Periapt of wisdom* bonuses included.

Possessions: jewelled holy symbol of the Dragon Lord (1,100 gp), gold and jade sceptre (*metamagic rod* (*maximise*)), scarab-shaped necklace (*periapt of wisdom* +4).

Agha's special abilities are described under 'Mummy' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC against his despair ability is 17; the save DC against his mummy rot ability is 19.

Treasure

In addition to his possessions, Agha was buried with necklaces, bracelets and jewellery worth a rough total of 8,000 gp.

O12: Maggish

You have discovered a hidden room among the ruins of the city; it is a small square stone chamber with no features but a single metal box, roughly four feet tall and half as wide.

This room is somewhat difficult to find; the description given above should only be given if the room is actually found and opened.

Area O12 was a secret for most inhabitants of Archaneroth; there is no immediately visible clue to its existence except the fact that the ruined building it is on seems to be larger on the outside (indicating a secret compartment of some sort); noticing this requires a simple Intelligence check (DC 20), Spot check (DC 15) or Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check (DC 20). The entrance to the room is a sliding stone panel; however, the switch to open it is under a permanent *invisibility* spell. Even on the off-chance a character should cast an invisibility-dispelling effect (such as *invisibility purge*) affecting the wall (and why would a character cast *invisibility purge* on an empty featureless wall?), the switch requires a successful Search (DC 40) to locate.

The Box inside the room is 3 foot tall and 2 foot wide, made of 1 inch thick lead, covered with warding runes and two locks (a common lock and an *arcane lock*). Both these locks must be bypassed to open the box. The lid of the box opens like a small door, swinging outward; a small humanoid creature, apparently immobile, stands inside the box.

Locked Lead Box: 1 in. thick; hardness 10; 90 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 40; Break DC 33.

Creatures (EL 19)

The creature inside the box is Maggish, a strange little monster of unknown origin that tried to wrest the rule of Archaneroth and dominate the city simply by slaughtering everyone that opposed him. He managed to kill thousands of Athans before the city's sages managed to contain him

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in this magical cage. Maggish has been put in *temporal stasis*; a successful *dispel magic*, *freedom* or similar effect frees him. If freed, the first thing Maggish does is spit out a strange gemstone (see below) as he emits a long, furious howl of freedom mixed with rancour; next, he violently demands to be told where he is and what has happened; note he only speaks Draconic and Goblin. He is quite angry after his long imprisonment and will take any excuse to viciously attack any creature dumb enough to stand in his way.

Maggish, male half-dragon goblin Ftr4/Mnk12: CR 19; Small outsider (evil, goblinoid, lawful); HD 4d10+8 plus 12d8+24; hp 108; Init +10; Spd 60 ft.; AC 27, touch 21, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +13; Grp +17; Atk +19 melee (1d10+6, unarmed) or +18 melee (1d3+2, claw); Full Atk +19/+19/+19/+14/+9 melee (1d10+6, flurry of blows) or +18 melee (1d3+2, 2 claws) and +16 melee (1d4+2, bite); SA flurry of blows, smite good, spell-like abilities; SQ abundant step, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to nonmagical diseases and poison, improved evasion, low-light vision, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electrical 10 and fire 10, slow fall 60 ft., SR 26, still mind, wholeness of body (24 hp/day); AL LE; SV Fort +14, Ref +15, Will +11 (+13 vs. enchantment); Str 18, Dex 22, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +13; Climb +17, Craft (woodcarving) +6, Hide +18, Intimidate +5, Jump +33, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Spot +16, Tumble +14; Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge, Improved Grapple^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armour, Improved Trip^B, Improved Unarmed Strike^B, Mobility, Multiattack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*unholy blight*), Weapon Focus (unarmed), Weapon Specialisation (unarmed).

Maggish's natural weapons are treated as magic for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction; his unarmed strikes are treated as both magic and lawful for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction. He cannot use his abundant step ability unless the Travelling Seal (see page 64) has somehow been deactivated.

Smite Good: Once per day, Maggish may make a single melee attack with a +16 bonus to damage against a good-aligned foe.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*darkness*, *poison* (DC 14), *unholy aura* (DC 18); 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 17), *contagion* (DC 14), *desecrate*, *horrid wilting* (DC 18), *unhallow* (DC 15), *unholy blight* (DC 14). Caster level 21st. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Treasure

The 'jewel' Maggish spits at the start of the encounter is a single tear-shaped drop of bronze, worth 10,000 gold pieces. This incredibly valuable item radiates no magic,

though it is surely not an ordinary bronze piece. Perhaps its powers and secrets may be gleaned from other sources...

O13: The Portal

This small, decaying stone room features only a life-size bas-relief resembling a stone arch on the far wall. The arch seems real, except it leads nowhere.

This room held the sacred portal the Athan priests used to travel from their underground city to the surface and back. The seemingly simulated stone portal on the wall is actually the portal's arch; the secret to activate it – that is, for an actual teleport effect to be seen inside the arch instead of a stone wall – was lost when the last Athan priest died; in addition, the Travelling Seal (see page 64) has made it impossible to activate the portal for the last millennia.

Should the Travelling Seal be broken or deactivated by any means, the portal would become active again, though it requires a specific ritual to reactivate. A character with at least one cleric level must spend one of his turn/rebuke undead attempts to focus divine power on the portal as he mouths the words *Exit Through the Entrance* in the Ancient Athan Tongue. The only living beings that remember the words to reactivate this portal are Ravahnasa Singh (O5) and the demoness Sazabel (O3), though a *legend lore* or similar means could reveal them. Once the ritual is enacted, the portal is activated for ten minutes. After the ten minutes have elapsed, the portal becomes inactive and must be reactivated again. As long as the portal is active, any living creature stepping through it is automatically *teleported* without error to the great entrance at the base of Mount Moru, the point where rubble blocks the pass between Moru Road and **Area I** (See 'The Lost Pass', page 2). By the same token, any creature stepping through the pass outside is *teleported* here if it crosses the portal while it is activated.

Note that, once the Travelling Seal has been broken, it is possible to activate the portal directly from the surface, by enacting the ritual in front of the Lost Pass entrance outside **Area I2**; this activates the portal on the mountain base.

O14: The Stone of Forbiddance

You reach a tall standing stone, at least twice as tall as a normal human. The stone stands before an ancient masonry wall, so old it looks almost the same as the unworked rock walls around it. Both the standing stone and the wall behind it show several half-erased marks and symbols.

Once, this was the entrance to the Temple of the Dragon Lord. The east wall had a great, splendourous entrance into the temple, surrounded by effigies of dragons, gods and

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demons; the great standing stone had sacred words written in gold and jade. After the Gods' Curse, the great door disappeared, leaving only an impenetrable stone wall, and the writings on the standing stone were changed to communicate the Gods' law, forbidding any living creature from entering the Lost Temple again.

The standing stone reads the following message, in great carved words written in the Ancient Athan tongue:

*Never Enter The Lost Temple Again
So Sayeth Heaven, Stone and Time*

Just below these words, written in the same language, a new message can be seen, carved much more recently:

*The Son Goes In
The Dragon is Mightier than the Gods*

The stone wall is actually sealed forever; using effects such as *dimension door* or *teleport* to cross to the other side is virtually impossible as long as the Travelling Seal (see page 64) remains in effect. The wall is not a magical effect, so the entrance cannot be restored by *dispel magic*, *mage's disjunction* or similar spells; other than *wishes* and similar effects, perhaps the only way in would be through *passwall* effects and the like. Of course, brute force is always an option; the wall has a thickness of ten feet, 1,800 hit points per 10 foot by 10 foot section and a break DC of 65. Four Medium humanoids working with the appropriate tools could clear a permanent 10 foot by 10 foot passage through the wall in little more than two hours; a creature with a burrowing speed can also burrow through the wall normally. Of course, attempting to open such a way would surely attract the attention of every living creature in the city, at least ensuring the intervention of Sazabel (O3) and all three of Aogarn's guard teams (if they have not been dealt with already); Ravahna Singh (O5), if still alive, is quite likely to approach to see what is happening.

Areas O15 to O27: Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord

This is the temple the Athans erected to their Dragon Lord, forever sealed below the mountain after the Gods' Curse. It is a true labyrinth of tombs, tunnels, doors and staircases, full of undead creatures and deadly traps.

The Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord may only be reached through the sealed tunnel from O14, and then only by unconventional means as the passage was permanently sealed by the Gods.

O15: The Entrance Chamber

The silence is absolute as you enter this chamber. That, and the fact it is far better preserved than the ruined city outside, are your first impressions. It is a not-quite square stone room, with four large stone doors and a great symbol on the floor – the holy symbol of the coiling dragon. You immediately feel the weight of the thousands of years the room had remained sealed away from the outside world, inhabited only by the dead. Yet, those armoured warriors look quite alive...

The above description should only be given to characters that have actually managed to enter Area O15. The room's west door has no lock or handle, so there is no obvious way to open it.

Stone Door: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; 720 hit points; AC 5; Break DC 65.

The door contains a permanent *wall of force* effect inside, preventing it from being easily broken through, even by magic. A *disintegrate* spell destroys the door as usual; the Travelling Seal prevents most kinds of dimensional travel through it.

THE LOST TEMPLE OF THE DRAGON LORD AS A DUNGEON

This is an ancient Athan temple, with masonry walls and stone doors. The walls here have a minimum thickness of one inch, with hardness 8, Break DC 45 and 180 hit points per 10 foot by 10 foot square. Except where otherwise noted, all doors in the area are pivoting stone slabs, with a thickness of four inches, Break DC 30, hardness 8 and 60 hit points. Those doors that are locked have an Open Lock DC of 40.

The entire area is given light by pale *everburning torches*, still burning even after several millennia. These torches are located at regular 15 foot intervals throughout the dungeon walls.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE LOST TEMPLE OF THE DRAGON LORD

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring Areas O15-O27, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering 1d6+1 of Aogarn's Dragon Guards (statistics given in Area O2).

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The door has a small semicircular depression near its centre, less than one inch deep. This depression is intended for the special crystal sphere keys that Athan priests used to open the door; Aogarn tracked down and destroyed all such keys, except for the one he carries and the one buried with Eth Samahn in **Area O7**. If a crystal sphere key such as these is pressed against the depression, the door opens automatically. If the door is closed, a crystal sphere key is required to open it again, even from the inside.

The room itself is a square-ish 20 foot by 25 foot stone chamber, with the Dragon Lord holy symbol on the ground and stone doors on each of its walls. The door on the west wall is the handle-less door leading west to **O14** and the Damned City. The north and south doors are common stone doors, closed but not locked anymore; the east door is actually a double stone door, leading into **Area O17**.

Creatures (EL 16)

Four dragon guards (statistics described in **O2**) are permanently stationed here. They have orders from Aogarn to prevent anyone from entering the temple, preferably by killing the intruder.

Dragon Guards (4): hp 87 each; see **Area O2** for details.

O16: *Aspim, the Second Slave*

This looks like a typical Athan burial chamber, except there is something eerie in the air; like the darkness was thicker and more insidious here, actually straining the light coming from the green torch on the far wall. There is a single coffin of black polished stone on a low dais, with several symbols and marks carved in gold.

Areas **O16**, **O17** and **O18** contain the graves of those three servants of the Dragon Lord that were closest to him; therefore, they are better preserved and cared for than most other tombs in the area. Both **Area O16** and **Area O18** have a single black coffin on a dais and a single everburning torch providing light to the room.

The dais of this particular room has the inscription *Aspim The Death* in Ancient Athan.

Creatures (EL 17)

All three of the Dragon Lord's slaves are vampires, transformed by the dreadful deal they made with their fell master. They pretended to side with Aogarn and let him continue on his quest, offering to help him 'guard the ruins' all the while; however, their scheme is much deeper and more dangerous than that.

This room holds the remains of Aspim, the Dragon Lord's favoured assassin and Second slave. He does not like the bluffing game with Aogarn and is aching for a good confrontation; a party of unknown intruders might just provide the sport he needs. More information about Aspim and the other two slaves of the Dragon Lord can be found on pages 81 and 122 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Aspim, the Second Slave: hp 97; see *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 122.

O17: *Jeldanara, the First Slave*

You come to a sumptuous stone chamber, well preserved even through the millennia; a flight of stairs leads up to the main area, which is flanked by three doors. The middle door is by far the largest you have seen inside this tomb, a massive double iron gate crammed with symbols, arcane writings and strange ornaments. In the floor of the chamber there is a black stone slab, well polished and preserved, full of strange golden markings. Two green flame torches give light to the scene.

Areas **O16**, **O17** and **O18** contain the graves of those three servants of the Dragon Lord that were closest to him; therefore, they are better preserved and cared for than most other tombs in the area. The slab in this room's floor opens to the tomb of the Dragon Lord's first slave. The slab is not locked or trapped; however, moving it requires a successful Strength check (DC 15). There are two everburning torches providing light to the room.

The north and south doors of this room are normal stone doors, closed but not locked; the east wall, however, is a great double stone gate, covering the Dragon Lord's tomb. More information about this door can be found in the description for **Area O26**.

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On the stone slab there is an inscription in Ancient Athan:
Jeldanara The Love.

Creatures (EL 17)

All three of the Dragon Lord's slaves are vampires, transformed by the dreadful deal they made with their fell master. They pretended to side with Aogarn and let him continue on his quest, offering to help him 'guard the ruins' all the while; however, their scheme is much deeper and more dangerous than that.

This room holds the remains of Jeldanara, the Dragon Lord's First Slave, his most loyal subject – and his true love. Jeldanara is crushed by the violation of her master's sanctuary, though she yearns for Aogarn's plan to succeed since that would bring the Dragon Lord back to the Mortal Plane. She has claimed the right to slay Aogarn personally once his schemes come to fruition. If faced with new intruders, she tries to put them against Aogarn, at the same time getting them to undo the Travelling Seal. More information about Jeldanara and the other two slaves of the Dragon Lord can be found in page 81 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Jeldanara, the First Slave: hp 104; see *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 125.

Treasure

In addition to her carried possessions, Jeldanara wears a diamond earring on her left ear, an old gift from the Dragon Lord himself; she does not know what it is for. The earring is a single tear-shaped diamond, worth at least 10,000 gold pieces; in addition, although it does not radiate magic, it seems to have some other strange, unknown properties. Perhaps the adequate book might be able to shed some light on what the gem truly is and what it does...

O18: N'to'och, the Third Slave

This looks like a typical Athan burial chamber, except there is something eerie in the air; like the darkness was thicker and more insidious here, actually straining the light coming from the green torch on the far wall. There is a single coffin of black polished stone on a low dais, with several symbols and marks carved in gold.

Areas **O16**, **O17** and **O18** contain the graves of those three servants of the Dragon Lord that were closest to him; therefore, they are better preserved and cared for than most other tombs in the area. Both **Area O16** and **Area O18** have a single black coffin on a dais and a single everburning torch providing light to the room.

The dais of this particular room has the inscription *N'to'och the Fortune* in Ancient Athan.

Creatures (EL 17)

All three of the Dragon Lord's slaves are vampires, transformed by the dreadful deal they made with their fell master. They pretended to side with Aogarn and let him continue on his quest, offering to help him 'guard the ruins' all the while; however, their scheme is much deeper and more dangerous than that.

This room holds the remains of N'to'och, the Dragon Lord's spokesman, best friend and favourite plaything. He tries to hide from intruders; if discovered, he points them in the direction of Aspim the Second Slave, to let them kill each other. More information about N'to'och and the other two slaves of the Dragon Lord can be found in page 81 of the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

N'to'och, the Third Slave: hp 97; see *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 126.

O19: Giant Guard Tombs

This chamber is much taller than the others you have seen in this area, with a ceiling that reaches about 20 feet up. The immense sarcophagus in this chamber seems made for a giant rather than a man; it has no carvings except for a single, oversized human face carved where the coffin occupant's head should be. The chamber is mostly bare beside this, except for two green flame torches burning on either wall.

These burial chambers (all areas labelled '**O19**' and the **O8** areas adjacent to them) were specially set up for the Six Giant Guards, a special group of guardian mummies made not out of normal embalmed human bodies but instead involving greater and darker powers in their creation. The Athans created and used these six mummies to defend their tombs against poachers; before the Dragon Lord fell, he ordered the Six Guardians to be stationed in the six rooms nearest to his tomb, so they would guard his eternal slumber as they did his life.

The 13 foot long coffins in these burial chambers take up virtually the entire floor, making it difficult to move through the room, let alone fight inside it.

Creatures (EL 17)

Each of these chambers has a single Giant Guard; after Aogarn's pass through the dungeon, only four of them survive, one in each of the chambers marked **O19**. The Giant Guards attack any living thing that crosses their chambers, without distinction.

Giant Guard (Advanced Mummy Ftr6): CR 17; Large undead; HD 24d12+3 plus 6d10; hp 192; Init +3; Speed 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +18; Grp +33; Atk +20* melee (2d6+36* plus mummy rot/19-20, slam); Full Atk +20* melee (2d6+36* plus mummy rot/19-20, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA despair, mummy rot;

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SQ DR 5/–, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, vulnerability to fire; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +9, Will +18; Str 32, Dex 8, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Hide +14, Listen +17, Move Silently +14, Spot +17; Ability Focus (despair), Ability Focus (mummy rot), Alertness, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armour, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialisation (slam).

*Includes modifiers from Power Attack (–9 attack, +18 damage).

All of the giant guards' special abilities are detailed under 'Mummy' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC for the giant guards' despair and mummy rot abilities is 29.

Treasure

The oversized bracelets, necklace, headdress and other jewellery a single giant guard is buried with can be sold for a rough total of 18,000 gold pieces.

O20: The Warrior-Kings

This is a very ornate Athan burial chamber, with three lidless sarcophagi standing up on the corners and several lines of hieroglyphs on the walls. There are vases and effigies, all of them full of majestic icons and symbols.

Many of the tombs in this area are dedicated to past Athan kings, both from the city of Archanerth and from other cities; this room was dedicated to three famous warrior kings of the Athan culture. Three open sarcophagi stand on the north, west and south walls; each of them contains a single humanoid corpse, not as well conserved as could be expected. These are no mummies; though their flesh has not rotted, they do not seem embalmed either, having been instead a target of the dark process the Athans used to preserve their kings – they were turned into undead lords.

The hieroglyphs and marks on the walls actually tell a story; a successful Decipher Script check (DC 40) reveals it is the story of Anhunn, Beoghtah and Beghann, the three warrior-kings, and their elevated deeds.

Creatures (EL 16)

The kings are stirred to life if a living, intelligent creature reads their names on the wall scriptures or the sarcophagi ornaments, as well as if someone attempts to steal the chamber's treasure. They are filled with hatred for the living, so they spare nobody.

Athan Warrior-Kings (3 Advanced Wights Ftr8): CR 13; Medium undead; HD 8d12 plus 8d10+3; hp 99 each; Init +6; Speed 30 ft.; AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +12; Grp +16; Atk +16 melee (1d4+4 plus

energy drain, slam) or +14* melee (2d4+20*/15-20, Athan royal sword); Full Atk +16 melee (1d4+4 plus energy drain, slam) or +14*/+9*/+4* melee (2d4+20*/15-20, Athan royal sword); SA create spawn, energy drain; SQ darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Hide +14, Intimidate +18, Listen +13, Move Silently +21, Spot +13; Ability Focus (energy drain), Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Critical (falchion), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armour, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Specialisation (falchion).

*Already includes Power Attack modifiers (–5 attack, +10 damage).

The Athan Warrior Kings' special attacks are explained under 'Wight' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC for their energy drain ability is 21 due to their increased feats, Hit Dice and Charisma.

Possessions: Athan royal sword (+2 falchion), Athan royal armour (+2 breastplate).

Treasure

In addition to their weapons and armour, each of the Athan Warrior-Kings was buried with a golden sceptre (1,000 gp), a jade-encrusted silver necklace (650 gp), a great golden crown inlaid with lapis lazuli (2,150 gp) and a silver torc with garnets (700 gp).

O21: The Priest-Kings

This is a typical Athan burial chamber but more opulent, with numerous religious icons, effigies and symbols on the walls and floor. Two open sarcophagi stand against the left and right walls of the chamber, showing grim corpses inside.

Many of the tombs in this area are dedicated to past Athan kings; this room in particular was dedicated to three famous Priest-Kings. There are standing open sarcophagi on the west and east walls; a single humanoid corpse, dressed in religious attire, rests inside each of them. Rather than mummies, these corpses are a darker form of undead, created by perverse Athan rituals intended to preserve the corrupt soul of their rulers long after death.

A successful Decipher Script check (DC 40) reveals the hieroglyphs and marks on the walls identify the two corpses as Isa Thu and Ashgahn, great priest-kings of the Athan culture.

Creatures (EL 18)

The kings are stirred to life if their treasure is stolen or if a living, intelligent creature reads their names on the wall scriptures or the sarcophagi ornaments. They attack without rest or compassion.

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Athan Priest-Kings (2 Advanced Wights Clr11): CR 16; Medium undead; HD 8d12 + 11d8; hp 101 each; Init +6; Speed 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 17, flat-footed 20; Base Atk/Grp +12; Grp +16; Atk +16 melee (1d4+2 plus energy drain, slam) or +18 melee (1d4+5, Priest-King's ankh); Full Atk +14 melee (1d4+2 plus energy drain, slam) or +18/+13/+8 melee (1d4+5, Priest-King's ankh); SA create spawn, energy drain, rebuke undead 8/day, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., undead traits; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +15; Str 15, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Hide +15, Knowledge (religion) +16, Listen +17, Move Silently +21, Spot +17; Ability Focus (energy drain), Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Quicken Spell, Weapon Focus (morningstar).

The Athan Priest-Kings' special attacks are explained under 'Wight' in Chapter One of the *MM*. The save DC for their energy drain ability is 21 due to their increased feats, Hit Dice and Charisma.

Spells Prepared (6/6+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1; save DC 14 + spell level): 0th—guidance (2), resistance (2), virtue (2); 1st—bane, cause fear, command, doom, magic stone, protection from good*, shield of faith; 2nd—detect thoughts*, enthal, hold person (2), silence (2); 3rd—bestow curse (2), clairaudience/clairvoyance*, contagion (2), dispel magic; 4th—divine power (2), poison (2), unholy blight*; 5th—insect plague, slay living, true seeing*; 6th—create undead*, desecrate (quicken).

*Domain spell.

Domains: Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are class skills, cast divination spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Priest-king's ankh (treat as +1 *unholy morningstar*), sacred armlets (treat as *bracers of armour* +5), golden holy symbol of the Dragon Lord (2,500 gp).

Treasure

In addition to their carried possessions, each of the Athan Warrior-Kings was buried with a large golden necklace (2,600 gp), a great gold-and-jade headdress (3,500 gp) and a gold bracelet (800 gp).

O22: Trapped Tomb

You see another Athan burial chamber; an octagonal stone room with several markings and symbols on the walls and floor. The walls are lined with niches full of ancient pottery; the ground is littered with what seem to be humanoid bones, surely fallen from the niches. Three sarcophagi lie closed on the floor; richly carved with gold and jade, in the likeness of a life-size, regal humanoid figure.

These rooms (those labelled **O22**) hide deadly traps intended for whoever managed to enter the tomb and steal its treasures.

Traps (EL 17)

The traps in these rooms are very simple: as soon as one of the coffins is opened, the doors slam shut and lock themselves (Open Lock DC 40), as the room begins filling with deadly gas. There is no way to bypass this trap; the only way to avoid it is to refrain from opening the sarcophagi.

Deathdust Trap: CR 17; mechanical; touch trigger; repair reset; gas; never miss; onset delay (1 round); poison (deathdust, DC 30 Fortitude save resists, 3d6 Con/3d6 Con); multiple targets (all targets inside the room); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30. *Market Price:* 243,100 gp.

O23: The Warden

This burial chamber seems a bit out of place; despite being similar in size and structure to other Athan tombs you have seen, the marks and symbols on the walls and floor are drastically different from the Athan style. Furthermore, the chamber features not a coffin or sarcophagus but a plain stone dais, on which stands a gigantic, imposing humanoid with black, stone skin, decked in splendid golden armour. There are more arcane symbols around the dais than anywhere else in the room.

This used to be a normal Athan tomb, until the gods chose it to hold one of the guardians they assigned to watch

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over the Lost Temple. The coffins, sarcophagi, ornaments and skeleton niches were removed and the runes on the walls and floor replaced by divine symbols. A successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 40) reveals these symbols are intended to control and contain the thing lying on the dais, not to protect it.

There are two doors coming out of this chamber, both closed and still locked (Open Lock DC 40). After what he found on the adjacent **O8 Area** (another guardian like the one found here), Aogarn did not care to open this one.

Creatures (EL 15)

The creature on the dais is an otherworldly agent, a harrier of the gods, sent to the Damned City to lie in eternal watch should the Dragon Lord ever attempt to return from death. Should the Dragon Lord ever awake or leave its prison at **O26** by any means, the Warden awakes as well and begins pursuing its prey relentlessly. The Warden's task was to seek the Dragon Lord and put him to death again; however, the many centuries spent in this place of evil have poisoned the creature's nature and now it will attack anything that moves or stands in its path – and *then* it will go after the Dragon Lord.

The Warden (Marut): hp 112; see the corresponding section under 'Inevitable' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

O24: Dragon Guard Watch Post

As you reach the end of the staircase, you arrive to a small corridor, which connects with another two staircases. You notice the narrow corridor is a bit crammed right now, as four grim-faced armoured men advance to meet you.

These corridors are the permanent guard posts for Aogarn's men, charged with watching these accesses (areas labelled **O24**) and preventing anyone from bothering Aogarn and Blackblade as they attempt to break the Travelling Seal (**O25**). The guards obey their orders, rushing against any intruder without hesitation.

Dragon Guards (4): hp 87 each; see **Area O2** for their full statistics.

O25: The Travelling Seal

There is a great standing stone in this chamber, larger than a man, with an unfathomable symbol carved on it. The symbol glows faintly with what seem to be powerful magical energies. Other than that, the chamber is bare, displaying a plain, efficient architecture that does not resemble the Athan standards at all.

This small, square stone chamber was specifically created by the Gods when they cast their curse on the

city of Archaneroth. The chamber was created to hold the Travelling Seal itself, the magical standing stone that emits the great barrier preventing all dimensional travel within the lower region of Mount Moru (see page 64 for more details on the Travelling Seal). This standing stone is the centre and origin of said barrier.

The standing stone is roughly 10 foot wide; it has hardness 20 and 300 hp. It may not be harmed by nonmagical weapons and even those with an enhancement bonus must bypass its hardness to actually deal damage. Other than destroying the stone, very powerful dispelling effects may have a chance of affecting the Travelling Seal; a successful *greater dispel magic* against caster level 50 deactivates the seal for 1d4 rounds, which is useless for Aogarn's purposes but may have several important consequences, such as making **Area P15** accessible from the Darkdelving at **K13** or freeing Abbazel from his prison below **O7**. If *mage's disjunction* is used, treat the standing stone as an artefact for the purposes of the spell's chance of effect and consequences. If the stone is physically destroyed, the seal is of course deactivated. For more methods and consequences of breaking the Travelling Seal, consult page 82 in the book called *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Creatures (EL 20+)

Aogarn the wizard has spent many days in this chamber, trying to break the Travelling Seal so he can bring Archaneroth back to the mortal plane and fulfil what he believes to be his destiny. Unless they have been dealt with already, there is a 75% chance of finding Aogarn here, along with his bodyguard Blackblade. For details about this encounter, refer to page 81 in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*, which relates the final battle for the fate of Archaneroth, Mount Moru and the Dragon Lord Cult.

Aogarn the Wizard: hp 64; see *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 120.

Blackblade: hp 168; see *Tales of Mount Moru*, page 122.

O26: The Dragon Lord

This is a small, yet sumptuous burial chamber of black stone; the air practically reeks of darkness and stale evil. A single black stone coffin rests on a high dais of the same material, illuminated by six green flame candelabras. The coffin seems made for a normal human, yet an incredibly tall one. The walls are completely covered with ancient writing and symbols; long black curtains still hang on the left and right walls, eerily fresh despite the long centuries.

This is the end of the road, the Dragon Lord's chamber itself. The only entrance to this chamber is the sealed door to the west; this is a double rune-filled stone gate, locked by arcane magic beyond the ken of mortals.

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Dragon Lord's Gate: 5 in. thick; hardness 40; 400 hit points; AC 5; Open Lock DC 60; Break DC 60.

The arcane stone the door is made of is immune to acid, cold, fire, electrical and sonic damage; the various warding runes on the door count as a permanent *antimagic field*. Treat the door as an artefact for the purposes of affecting it with a *mage's disjunction* spell. The only key to this door is the Dragon Lord's phylactery; besides, it only works as a key if the Travelling Seal is broken. For more details on how to open the door, see page 81 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

The chamber itself is a 10 foot by 15 foot black stone room, with two 5 foot by 10 foot niches, covered by black curtains, on the north and south sides. At the centre of the chamber there is a 2 foot high stone dais, on which rests an 8 foot long black coffin, also covered in runes. The niches contain the Dragon Lord's treasure (see below).

Creatures (EL 20)

Amaros the Dragon Lord, the God-King of Archaneroth, bearer of the Dragon's Ka, was put to rest inside the coffin in this chamber many millennia ago, during the wars that ended in the destruction and curse of Archaneroth. Now, turned into a vengeful undead creature, he waits for the Travelling Seal to be broken and the door to his chamber to be finally opened, so he can return to rule Mount Moru as he once did. For more information on the Dragon Lord, see page 5 in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Amaros the Dragon Lord: hp 123; see page 119 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Treasures

In addition to his listed possessions, the Dragon Lord wears cloth-of-gold vestments (280 gp), a jewelled anklet (4,000 gp), a ring made of some exotic unknown metal, carved in the shape of two intertwining hands and inlaid with two rubies (4,500 gp) and a heavy golden chain from which hangs a star ruby (2,100 gp). Finally, the Dragon Lord's treasure, which he plans to use to rebuild his empire once the Travelling Seal is broken and he can walk the mortal world freely again, is located inside the two niches to the north and south of his chamber.

The north niche contains stacks of piled iron coffers (all of them *arcane locked*, Break DC 45) containing a total of 41,000 Athan gold pieces and 3,400 Athan platinum pieces. Among the coffers there are 6 eye agates (10 gp each), 4 clear quartz pieces (120 gp), 6 'dragon egg' shaped red spinels (100 gp each), a simple gold ring (10 gp), 2 golden yellow topaz gems (400 gp each), a plain silver chalice with two life-size hands carved as if cupping it (120 gp), and three 'dragon heart' star rubies (1,100 gp each).

The south niche has the following items hanging in display from the wall behind the curtain: Two real dragon claws (80 gp each), a silver ritual sickle (200 gp), a golden staff carved with a dragon's head at the tip (*staff of illumination*, 37 charges), 2 vases with carved depictions of funerary rites (1,200 gp each), a gold ritual sickle (400 gp), a golden scimitar in a silvered scabbard (800 gp), a dried serpent skin with a golden buckle (*monk's belt*), a set of twin darkwood and silver harps (500 gp each), a bust of the Dragon Lord sculpted in solid gold (1,000 gp) and a ceremonial jewelled adamantite sickle in a jewelled silk sheath (2,000 gp).

The south niche also has a secret compartment (Search DC 40) hiding three antique scrolls written in Ancient Athan. For a character able to read the Ancient Athan Secret Tongue (described in page 51 of the book known as *The Dragon Stone*), the scrolls detail the secret exercises and rituals required to purify a body for death and other ordeals. Treat the scrolls as a *manual of bodily health* +2.

O27: The Hellfast Gate

This small, square stone chamber stands out for its sober, architectural style, vastly different from the typical Athan construction. There is a dark stone arch in the far wall of this chamber; the area inside the arch shimmers with shades of black and red, giving the impression the portal leads to the bowels of a volcano.

This room was created by the Gods when they cursed Archaneroth, built specifically and purposely to contain the entrance to the infernal prison of Hellfast. The only feature in this otherwise empty chamber is a shimmering, open, unguarded portal; any creature crossing it is transported immediately to the Hellfast fortress (**Area P1**). The portal has hardness 8 and 60 hit points.

If the Travelling Seal is broken and Archaneroth brought back to the Mortal World, it is only a matter of time for the fiends inhabiting Hellfast to break their pact with the Gods and swarm through this portal to take over Mount Moru and turn it into an extension of Hell. Therefore, it is in the best interests of the Prime Material Plane that, if the Travelling Seal is destroyed, this portal should be destroyed too. However, the fiends have other plans – and other means of entrance; see page 83 in *Tales of Mount Moru* for more details.

Area P: Hellfast

When the Gods launched their curse over Archaneroth and the Athans, they erected the infernal fortress of Hellfast to anchor Archaneroth to Hell and maintain constant vigilance over its cursed inhabitants. Hellfast is a hellish prison in every aspect, with fearsome architecture and gates to the Lower Planes all over its structure.

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Area P can only be reached via the gate at **O27**, which teleports travellers directly to the Endless Spiral at the Hellfast entrance (**P1**), or through the Darkdelving at **K13**, which leads way down to the Cave of the Wyrmworm (**P15**).

P1: The Endless Spiral

This room apparently made of black stone has an otherworldly quality to it, like you just entered a bad dream. The ceiling is so tall you cannot see it; a grey mist oozes from the dark walls, studded with jagged black nails that seem to reach out to you to drag you into a nightmare. There is a sign carved on the floor, similar to a dark spiral; when you look at it seems to move, giving the impression it is endless. Then you hear booming thunder, and you face gripping terror...

This circular hellstone room is the entrance to the fortress of Hellfast. It is 60 foot wide and more than 100-foot tall, with six hellstone doors leading out to the northwest, northeast, west, east, southwest and southeast. The Endless Spiral, Hellfast's banner and the symbol of cooperation between its demons and devils, is carved on the floor.

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The fortress of Hellfast is made of hellstone, what passes for mortar and masonry in the Lower Planes. Hellstone is part stone and part crushed sinner's souls, giving its walls an otherworldly structure and supernatural strength not found on the Mortal Plane. Hellstone looks like a kind of organic masonry, except no living flesh is of such a dull black colour. The mortar used for these walls looks like greyish webbing, which occasionally jerks and twitches as if it was alive – and not quite comfortable. Some of the walls of Hellfast (for example **P6a**, **P10** and **P11**) look like craggy, natural black rock caves, while others (for example those at **P1** and **P6b**) look like well-wrought masonry, adorned with skeletal black spikes everywhere. Regardless of their appearance, all the walls of Hellfast have the same qualities: 5 foot thickness, hardness 16, Break DC 85 and 1,800 hit points per 10 foot by 10 foot square.

Except where otherwise noted, all the doors at Hellfast are made of hellstone as well, being 6 inch thick, with a Break DC of 50, Hardness 16 and 360 hit points. All of them are locked, with an Open Lock DC of 45 (it should not be easy to open the locks of Hell).

The Travelling Seal does not work inside Hellfast; creatures are able to transport themselves through it at will. Creatures may even use planar travelling magic to move from Hellfast to Archaneroth, in which case they always appear at the portal site at **O27**. However, if a character uses *teleport*, *plane shift* or similar transport

Once the 18 seals have been broken (see **P7**), the Endless Spiral begins glowing; at this point, any creature or object that touches the Endless Spiral is immediately *teleported* to the Battle Path at **P8**. There is no other way to reach **P8** or the Battle Path, as any planar travelling spell or effect cast inside Hellfast causes the caster to be transported to the lower planes instead. Exactly ten minutes after its activation, the Endless Spiral stops glowing, loses its teleporting properties and restores all 18 seals to their 'unbroken' state (see **P7** for details).

Creatures (EL 18)

This chamber is guarded by Murathos the Tarnished Bronze, a great dragon whose nature was perverted and twisted into a fiendish shape. Murathos was enslaved and forced by the fiends to guard the entrance to their fortress; now, he fulfils his duties painfully and bitterly, furiously swooping down from his high perch near the chamber's ceiling as soon as an intruder appears. For more information on the history of Murathos the Tarnished Bronze, see page 83 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Murathos the Tarnished Bronze (Half-Fiend Adult Bronze Dragon): CR 18; Huge outsider (evil, water); HD 21d12+126, hp 262; Init +6; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft.

spells to travel inside Hellfast, he is always taken to one of the Lower Planes instead and must use the same spell again to return to Hellfast; creatures entering Hellfast in this fashion always appear at **Area P1**. The Hellfast fiends are still forbidden from entering Archaneroth by any means, due to their deal with the gods; then again, the deal is bound to end as soon as someone breaks the Travelling Seal; after that happens, the fiends will not care for anything except who reaches the portal first...

Random Encounters in Hellfast

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area P**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering a hostile creature, randomly determined or chosen from the following table:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREA P

D%	Encounter
01-15	2d6 barbed devils
16-30	2d6 hezrou (demon)
31-45	1d6 ice devils
46-60	1d6 glabrezu (demon)
61-75	1d3 horned devils
76-90	1d4 nalfeshnee (demon)
91-95	1 horned devil + 1d4 ice devils
96-00	1 marilith (demon)

The statistics of all these monsters are given under 'Demon' and 'Devil' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

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(average), swim 60 ft.; AC 31, touch 10, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +21; Grp +39; Atk +29 melee (2d8+10, bite); Full Atk +29 melee (2d8+10, bite) and +28 melee (2d6+5, 2 claws) and +27 melee (1d8+5, 2 wings) and +27 melee (2d6+15, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+15, smite good, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ alternate form, blindsense 60 ft., DR 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to electrical, poison, *sleep* and paralysis, low-light vision, resistance to acid 10, cold 10 and fire 10, SR 31, water breathing; AL LE; SV Fort +18, Ref +14, Will +17; Str 31, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 24, Wis 21, Cha 22.

Murathos' attacks are treated as magic weapons for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +28, Bluff +27, Concentration +27, Diplomacy +31, Disguise +27, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (local) +28, Knowledge (the planes)+28, Listen+26, Search+28, Sense Motive +26, Spot +26, Survival +26, Swim +36; Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw), Wingover.

Breath Weapon (Su): 100-ft. line of electricity, damage 12d6 electrical, Reflex half DC 26; or 50-ft. cone, *repulsion* 1d6+4 rounds, Will save DC 26 negates.

Crush (Ex): Area 15ft. by 15 ft., Small or smaller creatures take 2d8+15 points of bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 26) or be pinned; grapple bonus +37.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 180ft. radius, HD 20 or less, Will DC 26 negates.

Smite Good: Once per day, Murathos can make a single attack with a +20 bonus to damage against a good-aligned creature.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*Speak with animals*; 3/day—*create food and water*, *darkness*, *fog cloud*, *poison* (DC 20), *unholy aura*; 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 23), *contagion* (DC 19), *desecrate*, *destruction* (DC 23), *horrid wilting* (DC 24), *summon monster IX* (barbed devil or hezrou only), *unhallow*, *unholy blight* (DC 20); Caster level 7th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Alternate Form (Su): Three times per day, Murathos can assume the form of any animal or humanoid as a standard action. This works as a *polymorph* spell, except that Murathos does not regain hit points by changing forms and he can remain in an alternate form indefinitely.

Water Breathing (Ex): Murathos can breathe underwater indefinitely and can use his breath weapon, spells and spell-like abilities freely underwater.

Sorcerer spells known (6/8/7/5; save DC 16 + spell level): 0th—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*; 1st—*animate rope*, *colour spray*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*; 2nd—*detect thoughts*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*; 3rd—*haste*, *hold person*, *rage*. Caster Level 7th; save DC is Charisma-based.

If Murathos dies, his soul is cleansed of the fiendish blood and his form reverts to that of a normal dragon of his kind. If he is allowed last words, they are deeply thankful.

Treasure

Murathos' hoard was stolen and taken to Hell centuries ago; now, all he owns is a silver and cold iron necklace (worn around the most slender section of his neck) with a carved stone pendant. This pendant has a special enchantment, allowing its wearer to reach a special chamber inside Hellfast. By saying the right command word ('*Deliver my Soul*' in Draconic), the wearer of Murathos' stone pendant is immediately transported, together with any creatures or objects he is touching, to the Soul Cave (P9). By activating the pendant inside the Soul Cave, the wearer is immediately transported back to his last location before visiting the Soul Cave.

P2: Hellchill Gate

The cold in this chamber is so bitter you feel it in your spirit rather than your body. The unnatural chill seems to come from a crack on the ground; a man could easily fall through this crack, and you have the sensation the fall would not stop in this world...

These chambers (marked P2) hold a bit of the soul-freezing essence of the Lower Planes, captured via great cracks on the ground. These cracks are a direct portal to Hell; they allow a character to move from P2 areas to the Lower Planes and back.

Creatures (EL 13+)

The icy cracks in these chambers are watched by squads of devils from the icy realms of Hell; for every round a non-devil spends inside a chamber labelled P2, there is a 10% chance that an ice devil will come through the crack on the floor. This chance applies even if there already is an ice devil in the chamber. There can be no more than four ice devils in the chamber at the same time.

Ice Devils (1+): hp 147 each; see the corresponding section under 'Devil' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The ice devils attack with full strength, intent on killing their opponents; however, they will not chase a fleeing enemy beyond the chamber. If they manage to rout a foe, they retreat back into their crack.

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P3: Stench Gate

The stench here is unbearable, to the point it revolts the very core of your being; the reek is not only disagreeable but also offensive to the heart and soul, like an unforgivable deed. The stench seems to come from the thick vapours emanating from a great crack in the ground.

These chambers (marked **P3**) hold a bit of the disgusting essence of the Lower Planes, filtering through great cracks on the ground. These cracks are a direct portal to Hell; they allow a character to move from **P3** areas to the Lower Planes and back.

Creatures (EL 11+)

The fetid cracks in these chambers are watched by demon armies from the Lower Planes; for every round a non-demon spends inside a chamber labelled **P3**, there is a 10% chance that 1d3 hezrou will come through the crack on the floor, one after the other. This chance applies even if there are already some hezrou in the chamber. There can be no more than two or three hezrou in the chamber at the same time.

Hezrou (1d3+): hp 138 each; see the corresponding section under 'Demon' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The hezrou attack to the death, though they will not chase a fleeing enemy beyond the chamber. If they manage to rout a foe, they retreat back into their crack.

P4: Thorn Gate

This chamber is completely covered in countless twisted, revolting thorns and spines. As you enter this chamber, you cannot avoid stepping on some of them, which bend and snap with disgusting cracks and pops that sound more unpleasant than if they had stabbed or pinched you. All the barbs seem to point towards a great crack on the ground, near the centre of the chamber.

The interior of all chambers marked **P4** is encased in a coat of dark, vicious barbs; they are harmless but quite disgusting to non-devils. The great crack on the ground is a direct portal to the Lower Planes; it allows creatures to move from **P4** areas to the Lower Planes and back.

Creatures (EL 11+)

The cracks in these chambers are watched by devil squads from the Lower Planes; for every round a non-devil spends inside a **P4** chamber, there is a 10% chance that 1d6 barbed devils will come through the crack in the floor, one after the other. This chance applies even if there are already barbed devils in the chamber. There can be no more than twelve barbed devils in the chamber at the same time.

Barbed Devils (1d6+): 126 hp each; see the corresponding section under 'Devil' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The barbed devils attack relentlessly and mercilessly, though they will not chase a fleeing enemy beyond the chamber. If they manage to rout a foe, they retreat back into their crack.

P5: Big Gate

The gate in this chamber is larger than the others you have found in the area, to the point it nearly takes up the entire floor. A nightmarish landscape, terrifying beyond words, can be vaguely discerned through the smoke beyond the crack; suddenly, you get the impression that falling through this chasm would not be a good thing.

Chambers marked **P5** have great wide cracks, more than 15 feet wide, taking up most of the floor. These cracks are a direct portal to the Lower Planes; they allow creatures to move from **P5** areas to Hell and back.

Creatures (EL 14+)

The cracks in these chambers are watched by great bear-like demons from the Lower Planes; for every round a non-demon spends inside a **P5** chamber, there is a 10% chance that a nalfeshnee will come stomping through the crack on the floor; this chance applies even if there already is a nalfeshnee in the chamber. There can be no more than two nalfeshnee in the chamber at the same time.

Nalfeshnee (1+): 175 hp each; see the corresponding section under 'Demon' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The nalfeshnee have no mercy, attacking viciously and dealing as much damage as they can; nonetheless, they will not chase a fleeing enemy beyond the chamber. If the nalfeshnee manage to rout a foe, they retreat back into their crack.

P6: Trap Gate

At a first glance, this dark chamber seems to be made of stone, only its walls and ground sprout sharp black needles here and there, and the stone seems held together by some kind of ghostly, moving webbing. Several strange symbols glow on the floor as you approach.

Chambers labelled **P6** are fearsome traps, combining a barrage of spells and an onslaught of fiends.

Traps (EL 17)

The trap in a **P6** room activates as soon as a living creature approaches the glowing symbols on the floor. Once activated, the trap has the following effects: first it attempts to paralyse the targets via a *mass hold monster*

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spell; then, it transports every creature inside the room to an extraplanar chamber located in Hell; then, it attacks those that were successfully transported with two consecutive *weird* spells; and finally it summons six fiends to attack the survivors. Characters that somehow avoid being *teleported* (by spell resistance or similar effects) are not transported to the extraplanar chamber, so they are neither affected by the *weird* nor attacked by the summoned fiends. The specific fiends summoned depend on the specific chamber; the trap in **P6a** summons only demons, while the one at **P6b** summons devils. All ten traps must be disabled separately.

Gate trap: CR 17; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; multiple traps (one *mass hold monster* trap, one *teleportation circle* trap, two *weird* traps and eight *summon monster IX* traps that summon either demons or devils, depending whether the chamber is **P6a** or **P6b**); spell effect (*mass hold monster*, 17th level wizard, DC 23 Will save negates), spell effect (*teleportation circle*, 17th level wizard), 2 spell effects (*weird*, 17th level wizard, DC 23 Will save negates; if it fails, DC 23 Fort save partially negates), 6 spell effects (*summon monster IX*, 17th level wizard, barbed devil (**P6b**) or hezrou (**P6a**)); Search DC 34 each trap; Disable Device DC 34 each trap. *Cost:* 1,018,000 gp; 73,440 XP.

Note: This trap is really many CR 10 traps in one; the first one creates a *mass hold monster effect*, the second one creates a *teleportation circle* effect that takes targets to an extraplanar chamber, the third and fourth ones cause two consecutive *weird* effects on the targets and the last traps summon six hezrou (if the trap was activated at **P6a**) or barbed devils (if the trap was activated at **P6b**) to attack the survivors. These effects are independent of each other.

Once a character has been transported to the extraplanar chamber by this trap, even if he survives the subsequent traps, he must still disable the *teleportation circle* trap (Disable Device check DC 34) or use some means of interdimensional travel (*plane shift* or *teleport*) to return to Hellfast. A character returning to Hellfast by disabling the trap or using the aforementioned spells appears at the endless Spire (**Area P1**) again.

P7: The Eighteen Seals

This small dark stone chamber has no features except for the misty webs and jagged spikes hanging from the ceiling and a glowing rune on the far wall.

All chambers labelled **P7** are empty except for a strange glowing symbol on the far wall, or the wall opposite the entrance (in those **P7** areas that have no entrance). The main function of these seals is to activate and deactivate the Endless Spire portal (see **Area P1**); the portal is

activated or deactivated by touching the seals a certain number of times.

If any of these seals is touched an *even* number of times (twice, four times, six times and so on) within 24 hours, it is considered 'broken'; this means its sealing magic has been temporarily deactivated. If a seal is touched an *odd* number of times (once, thrice or five times for example) within 24 hours, it is considered 'unbroken'; that is, its sealing magic is still active. It is easy to distinguish whether a seal has been activated; an 'unbroken' seal emits a bright, pulsating light, while a 'broken' one has only a dull, discreet glow. If all eighteen seals are 'broken' at any given time, the Endless Spiral at **P1** is activated, becoming a direct portal to the Battle Path at **Area P8**. 'Unbreaking' any of the seals deactivates the portal immediately. Exactly ten minutes after the Endless Spiral has been activated, all eighteen seals return to their 'unbroken' state and must be reactivated for the **P1** portal to work again.

To complicate the activation process, the seals have a couple of built-in magical effects. First, by touching one of these seals, the creature touching it is immediately transported to the farthest **P7** chamber in the area (the one directly opposite to it); that is, a creature touching the seal at the northmost **P7** area would immediately be transported to the southmost **P7** area, and so on. Second, any creature touching an 'unbroken' seal suffers an amount of force damage equal to the number of currently 'broken' seals.

P8: The Battle Path

You are transported to a sinister cave, seemingly made of the same dark stone as the other areas you have visited here. However, something in the air – a different quality, a smell perhaps, an uneasy chill – indicates you are somewhere else; somewhere darker and bleaker. A great tunnel comes out of one of the cave walls; a bitter wind comes from this tunnel, moaning like thousands of tortured souls and biting with the spine-chilling terror of eternal pain. As you wonder whether you truly are in Hell, a creature approaches you...

This is Hellfast's second level, known as the Battle Path; here is where the fiends expect to have their great battle once the Travelling Seal at **Area O25** has been broken. For more information about the upcoming fiend battle, see page 83 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

A 10 foot wide tunnel leads out of this cave to the east; this tunnel is the Battle Path proper, ultimately leading to the Hellgate at **P14**.

Creatures (EL 18)

Ever since he spawned as a troglodyte, little Ch'nun respected only power. Once he realised the freedom of action meant by being absolutely chaotic, he started

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living only to advance in power and ability; learning the ways of magic and demonism, educating himself in the best method to become as powerful as possible by the simple method of slaying other creatures and getting their treasure. Right now Ch'num (now calling himself 'Darkness Master') is in Hellfast with the intention of killing as many fiends as he can to gather their treasure; if he finds other intruders, he is equally likely to help or oppose them – he is a surprisingly good and efficient team player, though he has been known to turn on his allies for treasure once a common goal has been achieved.

Darkness Master Ch'num (Advanced Half-Dragon Troglodyte Bbn3/Clr3/Ftr4/Rgr3/Rog4): CR 20; Medium Dragon (reptilian); HD 2d10+3d12+3d8+4d10+3d8+4d6+90 (183 hp); Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 36 (20 touch, 32 flat-footed); Base Atk/Grp +16/+22; Atk +22 melee (1d4+6, claw) or +27 melee (1d8+13/crit.17-20, sword of the planes); Full Atk +25/+20/+15/+10 melee (1d8+10/crit.17-20, sword of the planes) and +22 melee (1d6+5/crit.17-20, luck blade) and +20 melee (1d6+3, bite); SA breath weapon, combat style (two-weapon fighting), favoured enemy (evil outsiders), rage 1/day, rebuke undead 7/day, sneak attack +2d6, stench; SQ Darkvision 90 ft., evasion, fast movement, immunity to acid, trapfinding, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2, wild empathy; AL CE; SV Fort +21, Ref +13, Will +10; Str 22, Dex 18, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Bluff +7, Climb +10, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +1 (+3 acting



in character), Hide +14, Intimidate +6, Jump +13, Listen +11, Move Silently +13, Ride +8, Search +9, Spot +11, Survival 11 (+13 when following tracks), Swim +10, Tumble +12; Cleave, Dichard, EnduranceB, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Critical (short sword), Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Multiattack^B, Power Attack, Track^B, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Darkness Master Ch'num's statistics assume his sword is in 'other plane' (+4 bonus); they also include the bonuses from his gloves of dexterity and his pink rhomboid ioun stone.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/3+1/1+1; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0th—*guidance, resistance, cure minor wounds* (2); 1st—*bane, cure light wounds* (2), *disguise self**; 2nd—*bear's endurance, invisibility**.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Luck (reroll a single die roll 1/day), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise and Hide are class skills).

Breath weapon (Su): 30-foot cone of acid gas, 6d8 points of acid damage, Reflex save (DC 16) halves.

Stench (Ex): See 'Troglodyte' in Chapter One of the MM. The save DC is 16 (Constitution-based).

Possessions: Bracers of armour +6, gloves of Dexterity +6, ring of protection +6, sword of the planes, ioun stone (pink rhomboid), eight potions of cure critical wounds, four scrolls of plane shift, the collected claws of 19 different fiends.

Pq: The Soul Cave

You cannot see the walls, floor or ceiling of this cave. You feel like you have entered an area of pure featureless darkness, except that you feel solid ground – sort of – under your feet and the air brings the sad murmur of thousands of invisible voices...

This area is technically outside Hellfast; in fact it does not belong in either Hell or the Material Plane, being actually a pocket plane on itself. It is the home to the disembodied souls of thousands of innocent people, doomed to Hell by mistake or misfortune rather than by truly deserving it. Here can be heard the moans of adventurers that died while exploring the Lower Planes and were never recovered, of children given in sacrifice to demons, of pious priests that gave themselves to a lifetime of torment to save another soul. Since this chamber is outside the Ruins of the Dragon Lord, it is not detailed here; for more information about the Soul Cave and its doomed denizens, refer to page 83 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

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P10: Devil Guards

Billows of sizzling smoke and flame emanate from the ground in this chamber, as if the dark stone reacted violently to the contact of the two monsters guarding it.

The temperature in this cave is slightly warmer, the air slightly murkier, than in the rest of the passage.

Creatures (EL 18)

Two elite devil guards, Belzar and Zaseroth, guard the access here, preventing any creature from going further inside the Battle Path. They receive orders directly from lord Baalbele (P12), one of the two rulers of Hellfast.

Belzar and Zaseroth (2 Horned Devils): hp 172 each; see the corresponding section under 'Devil' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

P11: The Lady Khaliji

This cave is full of thick, pungent smoke, with a foul smell and an evil feel. As you approach the cave, the smoke seems to take form and three demons appear where previously there was nothing.

This is an empty hellstone cave, full of acrid mist and smoke.

Creatures (EL 18)

Lady Khaliji is a very high-ranking officer from the demon realms. Lord Mrahaselech (P13) summoned her as a last resort, after his last lieutenant fell to the devils' intrigues. With ruthless, efficient Khaliji on the demons' side, it is



highly probable they will win the upcoming battle, and they know it; the demoness is ready and willing to battle Baalbele himself if need be. Currently, Khaliji and her four lovers/bodyguards are stationed here at P11, having nothing more to do but await the signal to start the battle; to this purpose, they rest and wait in an extraplanar post near the cave. As soon as a living creature approaches their cave, they manifest physically to face the intruder.

Lady Khaliji (Marilith): hp 216; see the corresponding section under 'Demon' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Khaliji's Bodyguards (4 Glabrezu): hp 174 each; see the corresponding section under 'Demon' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

P12: Lord Baalbele of the Thirteenth Circle

This chamber seems to be empty except for a great dark pit on the ground; the pit takes up most of the chamber's space.

This dark cave and pit is the assigned domain of the devil lord Baalbele, one of Hellfast's rulers. The pit is 20 foot wide and 200 foot deep, with bones and flames at the base. There is a Large stone chair on the bottom of the pit, which the Devil Lord uses as a throne.

Creatures (EL 20)

Lord Baalbele sits motionless on his hellstone throne at the bottom of the pit, reflective as a chess piece, making strategies and balancing wins and losses even before the battle has begun. He will of course brook no interruption to his meditations, lashing out violently against trespassers.

Lord Baalbele (Pit Fiend): hp 225; see the 'Pit Fiend' section under 'Devil' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

P13: Mrahaselech the Demon Master

At first, this stone cave seems to be empty; then, smoke and fire begin to seep through the cracks and inundate the chamber, in a cloud of evil darkness that does not seem to end – until it begins to take the form of a demon...

This cave is the assigned post of Mrahaselech, master of Hellfast's Demon Host. It is empty except for several minute cracks on the walls and floor, from which dark smoke and fire constantly pour into the cave.

Creatures (EL 20)

Mrahaselech never visits this chamber except on special occasions (for example, the presence of mortal intruders) in such cases, he bursts through the walls and floor in

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an explosion of smoke and flame, a true epic vision of contained fury since the battle has not started yet and ready to vent his frustration on anyone that comes near.

Mrahasaelech The Demon Master (Balor): hp 290; see the 'Balor' section under 'Demon' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

P14: The Hellgate

This great gate is too horrid to even describe, a mix of ripped bones, entwined entrails, dripping blood, solidified anguish cries, terror, fire, darkness, smoke, deceit and dizzying pain. Beyond this dreadful arch, pitch-black darkness awaits...



This gate leads out of Hellfast and into the Wurm-Worm's cave (**P15**); both demons and devils covet control of the gate and neither is willing to relinquish it; therefore, they have decided to have a great battle with the gate as the prize, both sides knowing that, when the Gods' Travelling seal is broken at **O25**, whoever controls the Wurm-Worm shall win the ensuing battle for control of Archaneroth. For more details about the fiends' upcoming battle, see page 83 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Any creature crossing the gate is immediately transported to the Wurm-Worm's cave (**Area P15**).

P15: The Wurm-Worm

This cave seems like darkness given form; as if the walls, ceiling and floor were made of the very substance of darkness itself. There is something else in the cave, something alive – or maybe the cave is a living being...

This is a nether region between Hell and the Mortal Plane, actually made of solid darkness in its most pure, evil and concentrated form. The only exit from here is through the

Hellgate at **P14**; if the Travelling Seal at **O25** is broken, however, it is possible to ascend the cave walls up to the Darkdelving at **K13**.

Creatures (EL 18)

This is the cave of the Wurm-Worm, the spawn of the great Nameless Wurm from the Wurm Caves. The Wurm-Worm is closely tied to the evil of Mount Moru, being in fact a spawn of the Athans' practices and evil worship, and having only gotten stronger with the many centuries this evil kept festering in the area, poisoning the roots of Mount Moru and becoming both the origin and the product of all its dooms and curses in an endless vicious circle of evil. It was the Wurm-Worm that begat plagues

such as the Nightwalker (**Area N7**) and the Nightwing (**K13**); it was from its foul demonic body that the evil fumes and darkness seeped through and permeated Mount Moru. Should the Wurm-Worm be slain, the festering evil that has contaminated Mount Moru for the last 10,000 years disappears, leaving the land tired and dry but with renewed hope; it would be the end of the eternal evil affecting Mount Moru.

The Wurm-Worm (Nightcrawler): hp 212; see the corresponding section under 'Nightshade' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

The Secret Level

It is said there may be another level to the dungeon, containing evils even greater than the Dragon Lord, Hellfast or the Wurm-Worm. It is said that whatever spawned the Wurm-Worm and the dragon cult still lives in that level. It is said it is the lair of the Nameless Wurm, the True Dragon Lord and Only God of the Athans. It is also said this level is hidden and impossible to find, lost forever in the blurred mists between truth and legend...

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RUINS OF THE DRAGON LORD

THE DRAGON STONE



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THE DRAGON STONE

J C ALVAREZ

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THE DIARIES OF FIALL GARNWYNN

*Sheathe your sword, my poor son,
In a scabbard of hide,
Let the steel be inside
Where all true deeds be done;*

*Sheathe your sword, my poor son,
In a scabbard of stone;
Let the rock be the throne
For the blade of the sun;*

*Sheathe your sword, my poor son,
In a scabbard of wood,
Let old oak drop the food
That your cold steel shall spawn;*

*Sheathe your sword, my poor son,
In a scabbard of sea;
Let the sightless depths be
Where the warrior hath gone;*

*Sheathe your sword, my poor son,
In a scabbard of man!
Let your foes become wan,
Their slaves scatter and run!*

*Sheathe your sword, should you wish,
In a scabbard of me,
So your black heart may see
How your joy I relish;*

*Still, if you sheathe your sword
In a scabbard of scale,
Let your soul become pale
And no Gods give you word.*

(Found carved on a standing stone, near the site of the disappeared Black Elk tribe)

The following are excerpts taken from the notes and diaries of the late half-elven bard and explorer Fiall Garnwynn, as best they could be collected after his passing. Most of these are, of course, annotations and thoughts penned by the bard himself, which shall allow the reader a unique insight into the mind of the artist at the core of his brilliant and unusual

temperament. However, they also include reports and relations from many other sources, including Garnwynn's friends and colleagues, as well as local folklore taken directly from the odd, anonymous peasant and even from true savages at the Morudhain border.

The reader will understand, I am sure, the value and rarity of these findings, as the famed explorer did everything in his power to destroy or at least hinder any evidence of his travels to Mount Moru and the surrounding lands, even despite – or maybe because – the strong emotional and blood ties he had with the area. It is only through unyielding, extensive research, as well as the investigation of faraway and often dangerous locations, that these notes have been gathered and put into the reader's hands.

On that note it bears repeating that, though we may believe the great Garnwynn's interest in obstructing his own discoveries bordered on unjustified obsession, the reader is well advised to use the information found in these documents solely for educational and informative purposes. The reason for this, of course, is the fact that any activities concerning the actual exploration of Mount Moru and its surroundings still entail great danger, regardless of Fiall Garnwynn's notorious exaggeration on that respect.

Brother Larthas Marradi,
High Official of the Silken Glove
Honourable Treasure Gatherers' Guide
Gallows City, Autumn
(Specific Date Undisclosed By Request)

This, then, shall be my last pitiful attempt at making sense of this bottomless abyss I have insisted on calling 'life' for the past near-century. Sometimes I wonder just how contemptible I must be, to need these ludicrous endeavours to flee the mirthless abyss of my immortal blood. Even undertaking these explorations was stupid enough, I see it now; however, making literature out of them, truly putting them to the written word for innocent souls to read, must surely be a crime beyond the Gods' ken. Yet I cannot find the

THE DIARIES OF FIALL GARNWYNN



strength to stop myself, for now remembering comes much easier to me than forgetting...

Fiall Garnwynn
– *Nowhere, No Time At All*

Located in the middle of the little known and justly feared Morudhain lands, Mount Moru remains a realm of terrible secrets and unfamiliar dangers. For years, the dread crags around this mountain and its unfathomable depths have remained unknown by the civilised world. It is a well known fact, of course, Mount Moru was the site of the ancient Athan civilisation, of which no trace remains except a couple of ruins. However, no living sage has explored the depths of the mounts, or the natural caverns that are known to lie below it. At least part of the reason is the admittedly little aesthetic appeal posed by a dangerous, craggy peak in the middle of a wasteland

when compared to an ancient elven city or an exotic faraway jungle; even so, any explorer worth his salt will admit a certain sense of frustration at not having yet explored that darkly attractive summit.

–From Sir Damhain's *Travel Guide for the Adventurous Sort*

Respect what you do not know, for not knowing is a mighty thing.

–Morudhain folk saying

Mount Morrah? I dinna rightly know, sir. Must be dragons below it for sure.

–Breannus Cogg, Fisherman of Meadowvale

To the Reader

Except where otherwise noted, the following excerpts are all Fiall Garnwynn's words, compiled from his personal notes and diaries by the Royal Researchers of Manderachi, with the priceless help of the Essaen estate.

The Three Books

The Dragon Stone is just one of the three books written about Mount Moru, the other two being *The Path of Archanerath* and *Tales of Mount Moru*. This book in particular contains detailed information on the Moru Country, also known as the Morudhain Lands, focusing mostly in the land's geography, population, culture, religion and inhabitants. Despite the veritable wealth of detailed information contained in these pages, however, those who wish to tell tales based on this book should make sure to read the other two grimoires as well; many of the cultural and geographical elements described in this tome depend on the more specialised, detailed information contained only in the other two books. Thus the reader will find a few references such as 'see *Tales of Mount Moru* for more information' or 'additional details can

THE DIARIES OF FIALA GARNWYNN

be found in *The Path of Archanerth*. Therefore, Games Masters of Mount Moru adventures are well advised to keep a copy of all three books at hand at all times.

The Dungeon as a Literary Genre

Dr. Mikel Mannedeus, Esq.

(Excerpt from *Studies on Literature and the Game*)

I have often conceived of writing about a certain new breed of stories and legends that seem to circulate nowadays, about brave adventurers and heroes that met their glorious destiny or final doom in the dark tunnels of an underground complex or labyrinth, often called a 'dungeon' by both our scholars and street tale-tellers. These 'dungeon stories' are often regarded as mere entertainment, a game even; here I would like to introduce the concept of the Dungeon as a form of literature, for our minstrels and chroniclers to commit to it as true art rather than mere diversion. The following is a list of elements common to 'Dungeon Stories', as I would like to call them, intended to generate a greater respect and awareness about this rich – and so far underdeveloped – literary genre.

The Story Itself

All 'dungeon stories' refer to a party of adventurers or heroes, who enter a deep labyrinth or maze where they meet progressively tougher enemies and find progressively greater treasure until they get to the bottom of the maze, its deepest level; there they fight the final challenge and get the ultimate reward, usually a relic, place or arcane secret that constitutes not only the greater treasure in this 'dungeon' but also its very reason to exist.

Underground

Be it the inside of a mountain or an actual subterranean maze, the stage of a dungeon story is always an underground complex, indoors, separated from the 'outside' world. The deeper these heroes go into this 'inside' world, the harder it is for them to survive. The multi-layered maze of a dungeon story has been often likened to a complex tale itself, with the many levels of the dungeon representing a chain of events, each deadly trap a heart-wrenching story twist and every staircase down a passage to the next chapter. Thus is also the human mind multi-layered, full of hidden dark secrets, stranger and more horrifying the deeper we delve into it. Thus is also our inner soul a dark and unfathomable dungeon, around which we have

built a world of commodities, laws and appearances; yet, the darkness still waits – and calls...

Enemies

As the underground place is a dark unknown place, so are its denizens a mysterious and monstrous race, to be loathed, feared and destroyed. All dungeon monsters are from other races or species; if they are humans they belong to another nation, belief or social niche. Whatever it takes for the heroes to kill them without contemplation, identification or compassion of any kind. The dark realm of a dungeon story is always full of monsters, scary, foreign and nameless, to be scattered and vanquished as the demons of fear itself. These monsters obstruct progress into the dungeon and provide an obstacle for the heroes to overcome; they also protect the treasure, the goal of the exploration.

Treasure

Dungeon stories always feature a kind of treasure or story goal, whether in the form of a monetary reward or a spiritual achievement. Ancient relics, buried gods and incalculable hoards are just some examples of what the dungeon story may offer those who successfully reach its bottom – and here the bottom is the end of the story but also the deepest revelation. The treasure is the reward for killing the monsters, for overcoming that loathsome, nameless obstacle; it is also a handy measure of the enemies' worth, as the tougher obstacles will yield greater riches. Treasure is also as valuable as it is hidden, which usually means deeper dungeon levels have greater rewards, with the final treasure being behind the toughest monster, below the deepest level. Thus it is in life, with those tasks that are harder always imparting the largest compensation; thus it is with life's lessons, where the most valuable is also always the best hidden.

Traps

No dungeon story can be called a true example of the genre without an array of deadly traps, awaiting the explorers and falling upon them to prevent their passage. Traps serve the same purpose as the dungeon's monstrous inhabitants, namely to stop the heroes from advancing into the dungeon. However, monsters are the dungeon's population, while traps and wards are an extension of the dungeon's will. It is only by its traps that a dungeon shows it is alive. For the dungeon itself is the greatest monster – the great, dark enemy to be vanquished – and traps are its claws, eyes and teeth.

THE DIARIES OF FIAL GARNWYNN

Heroes

Heroes in dungeon stories usually come in groups, contrary to other stories where the hero is always a single figure, even if he is often surrounded with lesser helpers and companions. This is perhaps where dungeon stories differ most from other narrative genres; in dungeon stories, all heroes are equally important. The cause – or maybe the result – is that every single hero in the party has a single different area of expertise that contributes to the team as a whole, as opposed to other genres where a single hero has everything – wits, strength, bravery, skill, power. In a dungeon story there is no single ‘hero’ but a group; the sum of the parts that make a hero. In fact, it could be said the true ‘hero’ of a dungeon story is the dungeon itself, as the bulk of the narrative always focuses on its atmosphere, history and contents; the heroes are there only to test the dungeon and ultimately unravel it – even when the secret is revealed and the goal achieved, attention still falls upon the dungeon. Thus heroes become literary tools to display the power of the dungeon itself: a warrior to test the mettle of its monsters, a rogue to test its traps and secrets, a wizard to solve its riddles and mysteries, a holy man to test the evil and darkness at its core.

Story Progress

As stated in the above paragraphs, a dungeon story advances as the heroes go deeper, the end of the story always being the deepest place inside the dungeon.



Thus travel through a dungeon always means an exploration into the depths, which gets harder the more one progresses. Thus success is never guaranteed – as proven by the bloody endings of many a dungeon story – and, more importantly, the hero that enters a dungeon knows that he will have to improve himself before reaching the end. Actually a dungeon story allows us to appreciate how heroes slowly advance in skill and power as they get deeper into the dungeon – otherwise they would be no challenge for it – so we can say a dungeon story is also about progress and advancement, even if its downward direction would suggest otherwise.

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

*Return to Moru Lands,
Beyond the sun and clouds,
Inside the misty gorges,
Below the moonless shroud;*

*Perhaps you might not see,
How dark birds caw away,
As you meet night and day,
Beneath a stoned tree;*

*Ah, it is – such a good feel
To return – to my homeland
Ask the ashes – where's my man?
Ask the Goddess – as I kneel*

*Willow and field
Have dried to the ground,
Arrow and shield
Are making no sound;*

*Mother and son
Are walking alone,
Walk hand in hand
Crumble to stone;*

*Return to Moru Lands
Beyond the house and road,
Beyond the fresh, green river
Where Addenaggen¹ rowed.*

¹The *Addenaggen* were a river tribe of Morudhain blood; vestiges of their culture have been found mainly in the northwestern borders of the Moru country (Note from the Translators).

Overview

Welcome you? Why should I bid you welcome to this godforsaken stretch of land? Better be gone and Godspeed; in these parts, they are much better words than 'welcome'.

–Old Smoke-man

Many things have been said about the Morudhain Lands being a desolate, dreary and nightmarish place. My favourite metaphor has always been the one likening the country to a gigantic old sundial, battered and broken-down, with Mount Moru as its solitary, unmoving gnomon. Time has stopped...

–Fiall Garnwynn, *Early Notes*

Geography

The Moru Country is mainly a barren wasteland of broken hills and uneven rocky plains, with the notorious landmark of Mount Moru in the middle. The climate is always temperate to cold, the weather rainy and misty; despite the frequent rains, the land remains dry, arid and desolate as though affected by some curse.

MORUDHAIN BORDERS

The terrain known as the Moru Country is a very loosely defined region, without clear political borders defining where it ends and the surrounding regions begin. To the north and east there are vast

THE MORUDHAIN WILDERNESS

When travelling across the Morudhain Lands, treat the terrain as trackless hills for the purposes of overland travel; characters count as moving at one-half their normal speed when crossing the Morudhain terrain. The sole exception is Moru Road; characters following this ancient path have their speed reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ instead of $\frac{1}{2}$. See Chapter Nine in the *Player's Handbook* for more details about overland movement.

Wilderness Encounters

Most of the Morudhain Lands count as temperate hills or temperate desert for the purposes of wilderness encounters; Mount Moru counts as both temperate hills and temperate mountain terrain. A specific list of the monsters normally encountered in the region can be found on page 56.

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

expanses of plains and hills, similar to the Moru Country but far more pleasant. These lands are unnamed and unclaimed, belonging neither to the Morudhain region nor to the countries beyond them. To the west and northwest the borders are somewhat clearer, as the fresh and fertile northwest riverbanks are a clear indication of where the Morudhain waste ends; finally, the Moru Country has its best defined border on the south march, marked by the start (or end) of Moru Road at the non-Morudhain village of Meadowvale and the Last Shrine of Iri.

Population

The Moru Country is mostly unpopulated, with several Morudhain settlements scattered throughout, with a total population of little more than 10,000. Humans of non-Morudhain stock can also be found,

mainly in Meadowvale and the Last Shrine, which total somewhere below 1,000 inhabitants. The bulk of the Morudhain population, however, are humanoids and intelligent monsters, including dwarves, giants, goblinoids, orcs and subterranean gnomes. Reports abound about dark elves and other, more sinister folk, particularly near Mount Moru itself. For more details about the denizens of Mount Moru, see page 11.

A Map of the Morudhain Lands

The Moru Country is a very small region, no more than 200 miles from west to east. However, this relatively limited expanse contains several geographical features and landmarks of interest.

PLAYING IN MEADOWVALE

Most characters visiting the village are sure to be treated well, as Meadowvale folk respect the adventuring profession. The general town alignment is neutral good, although there are people of all alignments living in it.

Meadowvale (village): Non-standard Power Centre (AL NG); 200 gp limit; Assets 8,700 gp; Population 870; Mixed (human 688, dwarf 26, elf 43, gnome 17, half-elf 9, half-orc 9, halfling 78).

Authority figures: Council of Elders – Audamha, female human Com9; Brian Cardyll, male human Com4; Brother Criagh, male human Clr2 (Iri of the Blessed Horn); Chevalier Bralanus, male human Ari1; River Rose, female human Exp6; Zann Appleman, male human Com4.

Other authorities – Samhaena (head of the witches' circle, female half-elf Drd2); Seallan (town minstrel, male human Brd2); Uncle Tarlogh (respectable criminal boss, male human Rog3).

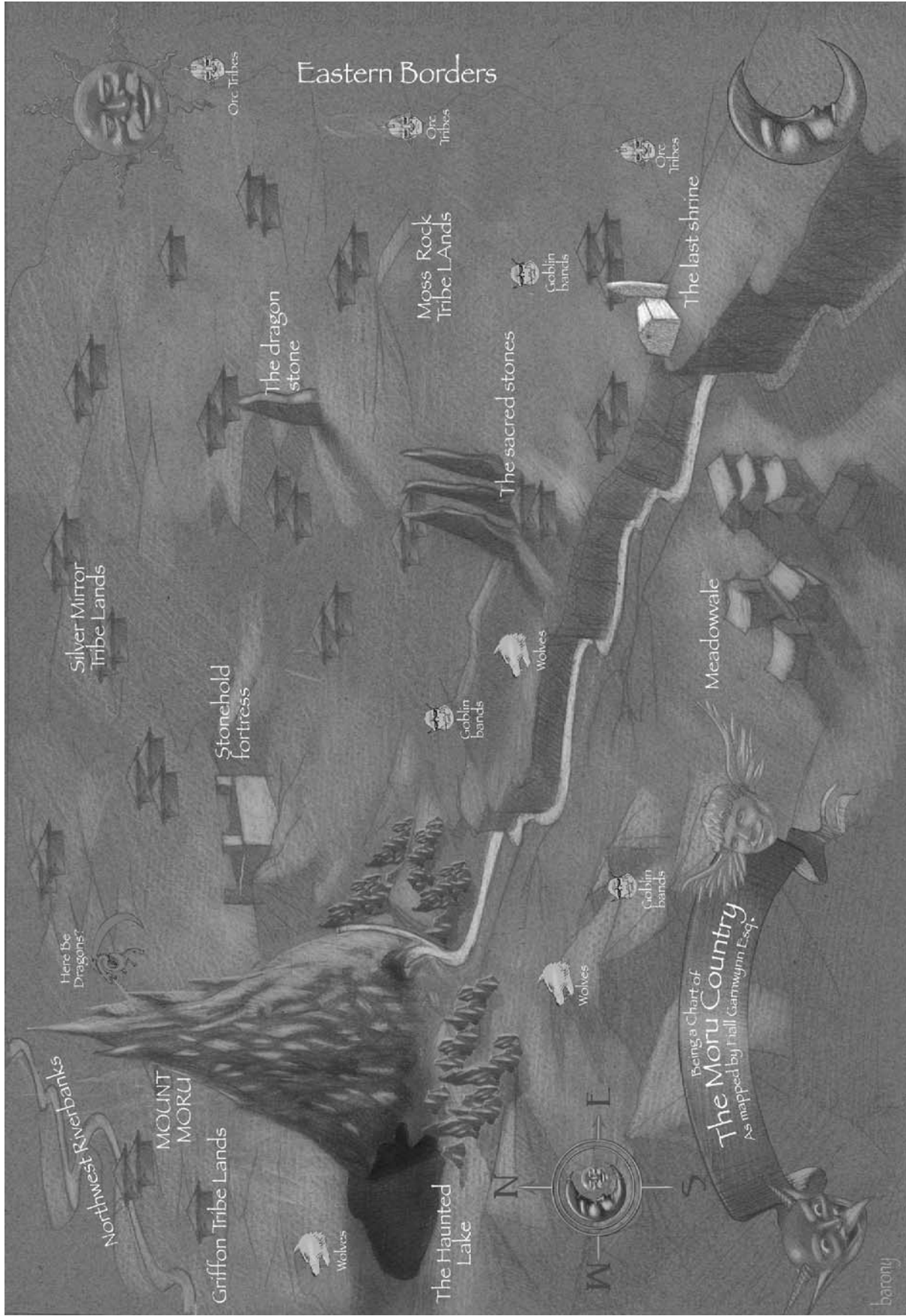
Important Characters: Apichai Nakalasin Tasakorn 'Api' (visiting adventurer), male gnome Rog1; Cormac Drake (local hunter), male human Rgr1; Cwldynn (old retired adventurer), male human Ftr3; Daiegha (Uncle Tarlough's lover and bodyguard), female human Sor1; Dially (town blacksmith), male human Exp3; Eithalla (town midwife), female human Adp2; Gorinna (clothes maker), female gnome Exp3; Harrough (captain of the guard), War4; Leah (owner of the *Old Stone* inn), female human Com2; Luandhagh Lippdhain (town cobbler and leatherworker), male halfling Exp1; Vegan (templar from the Blessed Horn), male human Pln1.

Others: Church of the Blessed Horn, Clr1 (2), Drd1 (1); Uncle Tarlough's Toughs, Rog1 (2); Village Guard, Bbn1 (1), Ftr1 (2), War2 (2), War1 (4); Village Militia, Com1 (43); Witches Circle, Adp1 (2), Brd1 (1), Drd1 (1), Wiz1 (1); remaining population, Brd1 (1), Com1 (782), Com2 (3), Exp1 (3).

The Old Stone Inn

The Old Stone Inn, a two-story building of wood and stone, is Meadowvale's main attraction; it boasts excellent food, good conversation, late parties, comfortable rooms and fair prices. A single night at the Old Stone Inn costs 8 silver pieces including meals. Leah, the owner, is a red-haired, lively woman in her late thirties; she runs the establishment with the help of two barmaids (Lianne and Baressa), three domestic servants (Duannah, Old Jobe and Vitley) and three stable boys (Guillaume, Gall and Lubber); all of Leah's hired hands are 1st level commoners.

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING



THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

Outer Morudhain

The territory known as Outer Morudhain comprises the lands near the country's borders, as opposed to those closer to Mount Moru at its core. Outer Morudhain includes most of the Morudhain tribes, as well as its two non-Morudhain human settlements – the village of Meadowvale and the Temple of Iri of the Blessed Horn.

MEADOWVALE

Located 100 miles south of Mount Moru, at the beginning of the trail known as Moru Road, the village of Meadowvale is known for its peace and quiet, the quality of its wine and the friendly demeanour of its inhabitants. Meadowvale is an obligatory stop for any explorer wishing to cross Moru Country, as it offers food, rest, equipment and most specially support and understanding. Meadowvale folks know well the cruel lands that lie beyond their town; what is more, many of them experienced firsthand the hardships of an adventurer's life before retreating here to live in peace, so they are all sympathetic to adventurers, never trying to dissuade them from their quests or take advantage of their needs. Here, adventurers are always welcome and well treated.

The main authority in Meadowvale is Carpenter, a friendly, down-to-earth woman in her late summer years, who treats all travellers as her children. Few

know her real name or the reason for her common, yet unusual soubriquet; however, she is undoubtedly a person of the best quality, with strong limbs, vast knowledge and a stout heart, capable of identifying what a tired traveller needs at a single glance and provide it without a moment's hesitation.

Readers take notice – At the time of this compilation, the woman Fiall Garnwynn knew as Carpenter had been dead for 50 years. It is rumoured a woman of similar description, going by the name of River Rose, perhaps Carpenter's descendant, has taken over the rule of Meadowvale in exactly the same manner as her predecessor (Note by care of the Researchers).

Meadowvale has the best travellers' inn for several miles around, *The Old Stone*. Any traveller visiting Meadowvale is well advised to come by and stretch his feet at *The Old Stone*, if only for a couple of ales. Besides food and drink, a patron of *The Old Stone* is guaranteed to obtain all the information he seeks about where to get supplies in town, what dangers await him in the Morudhain Lands and how to get to said dangers as quickly as possible.

MORUDHAIN TERRITORIES

More than three-quarters of the Morudhain lands belong, quite logically, to the Morudhain themselves. These lands are mostly vast tracts of uninhabited

THE RIVER ROSE

This woman is the great-granddaughter of the legendary Carpenter, whom Fiall Garnwynn himself befriended in his time. As her illustrious predecessor, River Rose has grown to become the undisputed spiritual ruler of Meadowvale, without ever holding an official title. She is a good leader, genuinely interested in the welfare of every inhabitant of Meadowvale; she can always be found doing something for somebody else, from playing to the children at the town plaza, to helping a citizen repair his house. If visitors arrive in her town, she does what she can to greet and welcome them personally.

River Rose, female human Exp6: CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 6d6+12; hp 33; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10, Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +8; AL NG; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Concentration +6, Craft (painting) +10, Craft (pottery) +10, Craft (sculpting) +9, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +11, Escape Artist +7, Hide +1, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +14, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Listen +3, Move Silently +1, Perform (wind instruments) +14, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +12, Spot +3; Point-Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Knowledge (dungeoneering)), Skill Focus (Decipher Script), Skill Focus (Perform (wind instruments)).

Possessions: Quarterstaff, light crossbow, case with 10 crossbow bolts, masterwork artisan's tools, masterwork flute, 600 gp in self-made art objects.

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

terrain, scattered with Morudhain villages here and there. The Morudhain are as unfriendly as they can be with strangers without being openly hostile. They actively hide their rites and customs from visitors, going to extreme lengths to keep them secret. Fiall Garnwynn was lucky enough to call the bluff of a group of particularly drunk and aggressive tribesmen, who threatened to scalp him should he make further inquiries about their secret practices; after a few words and challenges, it was proven yet again that a display of bravery is usually enough to earn the respect of the wildest of men.

THE SACRED STONES

These great stones have been in place since the oldest Morudhain and their most ancient legends can remember. It is an arrangement of 14 standing stones, each of them taller than 10 feet. Legend has it the gods carved and put them there as a sign

that this was Morudhain territory. The Morudhain see these stones as both their rightful blessing and inescapable curse. The strange carvings and marks on the stones bear some resemblance to current Morudhain ritual symbols, though they have an unmistakable unfamiliar quality, which accounts for the belief that they were made by supernatural beings. As it is, the Sacred Stones are a forbidden site; no Morudhain will approach them under pain of terrible curses from the spirits. The writer can attest to the majesty of these stones, the strange appeal of their mysterious marks and the fact grass grows near their base, perhaps more so than anywhere else in the barren, gloomy Moru Country.

THE TEMPLE OF IRI

The Temple of Iri of the Blessed Horn, also known as the Last Shrine, is indeed the very last outpost of civilisation before entering the vast, dangerous

HIGH PRIEST DEOVAIN

The current high priest of the Temple of Iri is a healthy, middle-aged man, as committed to the Unicorn God as he is to his kitchen and garden. He does not like authority, not even in the spiritual area; he is only waiting for the next young promising cleric to step up and take his mantle. More information about the possible succession for High Priest Deovain can be found in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

High Priest Deovain, male human Clr9: CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 9d8+27; hp 67; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d6+5, blessed oak staff) or +7 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+5, blessed oak staff) or +7/+2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +12; AL LG; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Craft (carpentry) +16, Craft (cooking) +8, Heal +21, Knowledge (religion) +13, Survival +11; Iron Will, Self-Sufficient, Skill Focus (Craft (carpentry)), Skill Focus (Heal), Track.

Possessions: Blessed oak staff (treat as +2 *quarterstaff*), light crossbow, case with 10 crossbow bolts, three *potions of cure moderate wounds*, five flasks of holy water, *immovable rod*, silver holy symbol, priestly robes, healer's kit, trail rations for two weeks.

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; save DC 14 + spell level): 0th—*create water, guidance, light, mending, purify food and drink, resistance*; 1st—*bless water, comprehend languages, endure elements, protection from evil**, *sanctuary, shield of faith*; 2nd—*aid**, *bear's endurance, bull's strength, calm emotions, delay poison, make whole*; 3rd—*continual flame, clairaudience/clairvoyance**, *create food and water, daylight, locate object*; 4th—*discern lies, divination**, *neutralise poison, sending*; 5th—*hallow, true seeing**.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Good (cast good spells at +1 caster level), Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are class skills, cast divination spells at +1 caster level).

OTHER PRIESTS

In addition to the High Priest, the shrine holds 4d4 priests of the Unicorn god at any given time. Most of these priests are 1st or 2nd level clerics (see Chapter Four in the *DMG*).

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

marches of the Morudhain Lands. The temple is a plain white masonry building, located on a ridge overlooking the outset of Moru Road. About a dozen priests live there, performing ritual services for adventurers and casual travellers, including the sale of amulets, holy water and good luck trinkets, as well as the application of healing and blessing rites in the name of their god. I regret to confess I only visited the place once, very quickly, and did not make any insightful records about it, being naturally distrustful of religion and its practitioners everywhere. The interested traveller need only walk the northeastern slope out of Meadowvale and follow it up for a little more than one hour, after which he should reach a crest overlooking the Morudhain Country and the Last Shrine. The ascent is definitely worth it, at least for the magnificent view.

Mount Moru and its Surroundings

The Mount Moru area, at the centre of the Morudhain lands, comprises the area's main feature, Mount Moru itself, as well as the few miles of terrain surrounding it. Other notorious landmarks in the area include

the Stonehold fortress and the well-known Haunted Lake of the Morudhain.

MOUNT MORU

Ah, the great mountain itself. It is easily the least kind or hospitable place this writer has visited in the wide world, though it maintains that strange, morbid attraction, akin to the appeal of pain, terror and dark thrills. I have climbed up its roads, visited its caves and even saw a couple of the strange monsters roaming there; one day I intend to go there completely alone and spend a night at its slopes, so as to subject myself to the full range of grim emotions it is bound to produce. Then, when I have gone through that ordeal, I shall finally enter its tunnels and learn. *Learn.*

(Scribbled to one side in the original): *I must do it someday; yes, I must do it...*

STONEHOLD

The fortress of the dwarves is an out-of-place rarity in this country of crude human villages and vast tracts of unworked plains. The name 'Stonehold' derives from a dwarven term, untranslatable into the

PLAYING STONEHOLD

Stonehold dwarves are unfriendly and reclusive, less hostile but much more withdrawn than the Morudhain. They are unlikely to allow anyone entry; should they deem a visitor worthy of attention – which depends exclusively on whether it would further their goals – they parley with him outside their fortress, probably camping by the roadside or something like that. Only truly rare and honoured guests would be allowed entry into the fortress but, once inside, any visitor is treated as a friend to all Stonehold dwarves, including their leaders. For more information about the Stonehold dwarves' goals and their reasons to be in the Moru Country, read page 15 in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Stonehold (fortress): Non-standard Power Centre (AL N); 200 gp limit; Assets 5,600 gp; Population 560; Isolated (dwarf 538, human 5, gnome 11, halfling 6).

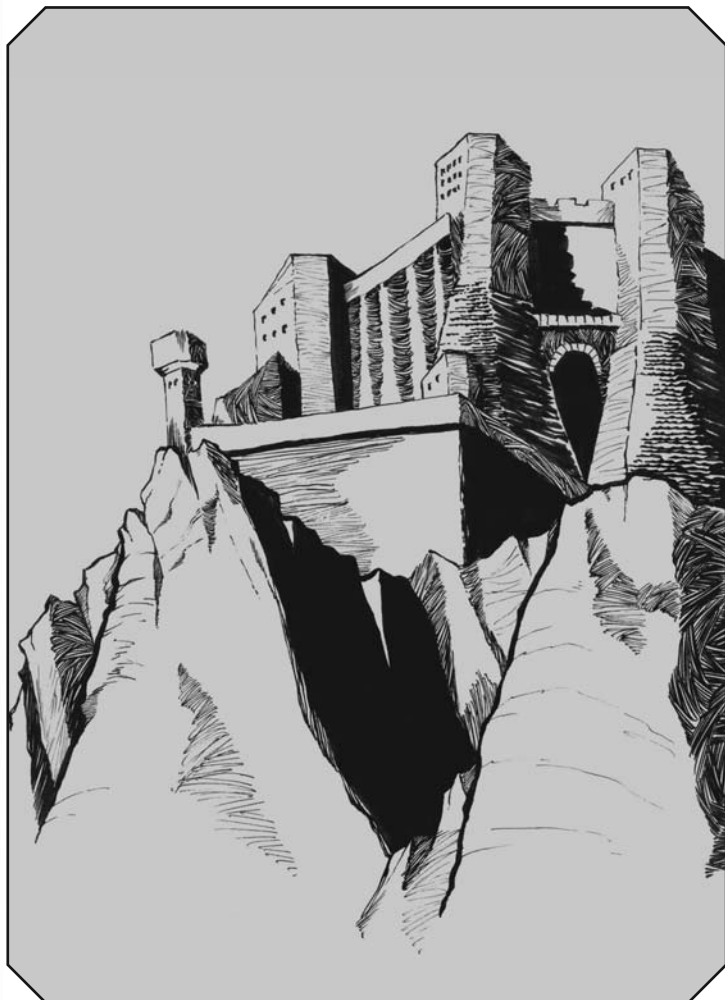
Authority figures: Lord Narli Nainground, male dwarf Ari1/Ftr4; Ralmi Stonebrows, male dwarf Wiz1; Trademaster Goli Harkstone, male dwarf Com9.

Other authorities – Patriarch Valiri, male dwarf Clr3 (the Hammerfather); Forgemaster Strali Twainshaft, male dwarf Exp6; Captain of the Guard Brai Cobblestone, male dwarf War4.

Important Characters: Master engineer Alsei, male dwarf Exp3; Lali Lowsing, male dwarf Brd1; Mogrud the Weapons Mother, female dwarf Com4, Matron Oladis, female dwarf Com4.

Others: Stonehold war priests, Clr1 (2), Pln1 (1); Stonehold healer matrons, Adp1 (2), Adp2 (1), Drd1 (1); Stonehold weapons guild, Exp3 (1), Exp1 (2); Stonehold scouts, Rgr1 (1), Rog1 (2), Rog3 (1); Stonehold Guard, Ftr2 (2), War2 (2); Stonehold Militia, Bbn1 (1), Com1 (15), Com2 (4), Ftr1 (4), War1 (4); remaining population, Com1 (515), Exp1 (2), Mnk1 (1), Sor1 (1).

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING



Common tongue, which could be loosely interpreted as 'The-Place-to-Keep-Stone-Things-Outside-and-Inside-at-the-Same-Time'; this could signify the fortress is a kind of warehouse or merchant outpost, though why would the bearded folk set up such a building in these flatlands, surrounded by hostile human neighbours, so far from their mountain home, is truly a conundrum to test the wits.

The fortress itself, located near the eastern slopes of Mount Moru, is a squat stone building, without towers or a barbican, though there seems to be a massive stone gate on its west wall, leading almost directly into a craggy, nearly inaccessible path. Dwarven guards stand watch behind this gate; although their posts are so well hidden behind the stone they are almost invisible while performing their duties. This, together with the fact the dwarves never leave their home, has made many visitors wonder if Stonehold is a deserted place, though would-be poachers and explorers are always greeted by the bitter surprise of dwarven bolts and axes.

Note from the Researchers: Fiall Garnwynn attempted to enter the dwarven fortress of Stonehold twice; he was never allowed entry, nor was he even granted an audience with a dwarven officer. Now, almost a century later, the purpose of Stonehold is still a mystery, though its dwarven inhabitants have come to trade frequently with both the Meadowvale folk and the Morudhain, who have gradually learned to accept the dwarves' presence in their lands. More recent and accurate information about the Stonehold fortress can be found in the book entitled *Tales of Mount Moru*.

THE HAUNTED LAKE

Near Mount Moru's lower occidental slope, about 3,000 feet above the ground, there is an underground spring coming out through a great cave in the mountain face. The spring turns into a pond of troubled water a few hundred feet below, which in turn spills into a thin creek, scattered with waterfalls, that descends all the way down to a great loch at the western mountain base. The spring, the pond, the creek, the waterfalls and of course the loch at the bottom are known to be haunted, with several legends and reports agreeing that something unnatural lives at the lake.

The Drowned Bride

Decades ago there was a village, whose name has been forgotten, near the craggy peak that is now known as the Mount of Terror, barely an hour's ride west of the Haunted Loch. There was a girl in this village, the daughter of an important landlord of the realm; this girl had such grace and beauty all young men in the village courted her. She inflamed every one of them equally, for she loved the admiration of men; however, there was one she preferred above all the rest – the brave and handsome son of the scribe. This young lad had never spoken to her, yet he wrote her long and moving letters where he spoke of his true love; it was these letters that moved the lady's soul and made her irrevocably injured with love. So, while she played games with all her other suitors, the lady was secretly waiting for the young scribe to speak of marriage. However, the young lad was rather shy in matters of the heart, as brave as he was in other aspects; therefore he never dared speak or propose to the lady, being content with

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

wistfully looking away every time she wooed and laughed with the other men. In fact, he believed the lady did not love him back, and soon lost all hope; he stopped visiting the lass and began leaving the city for long periods. Local folk rumoured he went to the dark grey lake by the mountain, now known as the Haunted Loch, to write melancholic odes to dejection near the dead waters.

When the lass got tired of waiting, she decided to force the young lad to action by inciting his jealousy; she accepted and even became engaged to another man and then to another, expecting the young scribe to come out of his stupor and attempt to win her heart himself. Instead of being stirred up to action as the girl wanted, the young lad was deeply hurt by these provocations and decided he would take his revenge. His heart, once clear and innocent, darkened with pain; his youthful countenance turned grim and hard with bitterness. He came uninvited to the lass' birthday party, storming through the gates like a messenger of doom, and there he found his

beloved gaily dancing in the arms of another man. There, in the dance hall, before dozens of guests, the young scribe cast a terrible curse upon the lass and the man she was with, dooming her to never find happiness with a man ever again, for his was the only true love she would have ever known. After these odious words, the young scribe rode away like thunder, his face that of a striking, wrathful god of olden times. He left the village without saying goodbye to anyone, going away forever to his home at the Haunted Loch. The terrified girl, who never thought her game would go so far, was horribly disappointed with her love and fell under a spell of grief for a whole year, during which she courted no man and saw nobody outside her family. Day after day visitors arrived or sent gifts, and they all were sent back. After some time, nobody went to see the beautiful lady, whose isolated grief became a part of local folklore.

A year passed by and the girls' mother and father became so scared that her little child would waste

THE DROWNED BRIDE

The ghost of a young lass still haunts the lake; she will appear before any character coming near the area by night, be it from outside or from the dwarven mines at **Area E16** of the Mount Moru dungeon (see *The Path of Archaneroth*). The ghost always demands to be told words of true love; if she feels they are insincere, she attacks.

The Drowned Bride, female human ghost Ari2 (manifested): CR 3; Medium undead; HD 2d12; hp 13; Init +1; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp —; Atk +2 melee (1d4 ability drain, incorporeal touch); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4 ability drain, incorporeal touch); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; SA draining touch, frightful moan, manifestation; SQ incorporeal traits, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL LE; Str —, Dex 12, Con —, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Craft (sculpting) +1, Diplomacy +10, Hide +9, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +1, Perform (act) +6, Perform (dance) +7, Perform (sing) +9, Search +7, Spot +8; Persuasive, Skill Focus (Perform (sing)).

Draining Touch (Su): Any creature successfully hit by the Drowned Bride's incorporeal touch attack suffers 1d4 points of ability drain (the Drowned Bride chooses which ability to drain, usually Charisma or Wisdom). Such a successful attack heals 5 points of damage to the Drowned Bride.

Frightful Moan (Su): As a standard action, the Drowned Bride can emit a frightful moan; all creatures within 30 feet must succeed on a Will save (DC 16) or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, necromantic, mind-affecting fear effect. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected by the Drowned Bride's frightful moan for the next 24 hours.

Manifestation (Su): The Drowned Bride is unharmed by nonmagical weapons and effects; corporeal, magical sources of damage have only a 50% chance of affecting her. Any spell, attack or ability that affects ethereal creatures affects the Drowned Bride normally. When not manifested, the Drowned Bride exists only in the ethereal plane; there she has Str 7, AC 15 and no incorporeal traits.

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away to nothing that they begged her to come out from her sorrow, promising her anything if she would only take a young lad as her husband and live as befits a lady again. She finally accepted, on the condition her hand was promised only to a man that could write the most beautiful of verses to express his love. Her parents complied and, within a few days, a poetry contest was held in the village; it was announced the winner would get the hand of the young lady. The poems and love letters that flew to the lass' house were uncounted, for the young men of the village had never forgotten her legendary beauty, even during her long seclusion. The girl read all of the letters, becoming more tired and grief-struck with each of them, for none showed the vivid, yet innocent worship of the man she had once loved; all fell empty and insincere to her needy heart. Then, when she had read all the letters and was ready to die of disenchantment and frustration, there was a knock at the door of the estate; the guards that opened it saw no one but the shadow of a black raven, cawing hatefully as it flew away. There was a letter on the door, sealed with black wax and enveloped in ashes. It was addressed to the young lady and, when her parents saw it, they were afraid and wanted to cast it into the fire. However, she walked down the stairs as if under a spell, took the letter from her parents' hands and locked herself up to read it. There it was – there were the words of love, there was the pure devotion, the true adoration of those letters she had read so long ago.

That night, while her poor parents silently prayed for her well-being, the young girl sneaked out of her room, left her house and went walking alone in the night. Those who saw her that night said she was following a black raven. She never returned to the village again.

A full moon later, some fishermen found the lady at the bottom of the Haunted Loch – together with her body, they dragged up the drowned corpse of the young scribe that had disappeared from the village more than a year ago. Legend has it the young lady's pale corpse, as beautiful as it had been in life, was still wearing a white wedding dress.

–Traditional folktale

In addition to the legends, there are many actual reports of supernatural encounters near the edge of the lake; this writer has talked to several

Morudhain men and women that swore having seen strange creatures, fish-like yet walking as humans, clambering about the water's edges during the late hours and, at the first break of dawn, climbing back up the cursed mountain and into some watery dark lair of ancient evil.

History of the Morudhain Lands

The lack of a common calendar makes it very hard to even keep track of the passing of years in the Morudhain lands, let alone elaborate a precise year-by-year relation of its history. The following is an attempt to give a semblance of order to the many legends, several vague accounts and very few evidenced historical facts regarding the past of the Moru Country and its civilisations.

The Early Morudhain Tribes

At some point in the far past, perhaps 5,000 years ago or more, the Moru Country was a barren desolation where nothing lived and nothing grew. Most sages agree the state of the land was caused by an ancient curse or plague sent by dark gods, although some maintain the Moru Country was the site of an actual battle between gods during the creation of the World. Whatever the truth, the region that would later be known as the Moru Country was completely barren, incapable of supporting life and probably inhabited by fiends and supernatural monsters of every order. It was into this gloomy devastation that the forebears of the Morudhain arrived one day – and they stayed.

These early settlers were of a stout race, barely evolved from cavemen, wielding stone and wooden weapons and dressed in animal hides. It is widely believed they were led to seek these lands by some outside force, perhaps an enemy race or a catastrophe that destroyed their original habitat. Few other reasons would explain the fact they would choose to come to such inhospitable lands, let alone stay there – yet stay they did, though they did not thrive or prosper quickly. A couple of millennia later, they had become as much a part of the land as the broken hills and chasms, as much the land's children as the demons, goblins and spirits infesting it. They called themselves the *Morudhain*, 'those who live near the horror' or 'those belonging to the horror'. They did not multiply or invade neighbouring lands;

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

however, they apparently did repel many an invasion from other tribes, as suggested by chronicles and reports from many foreign cultures, most of them far more advanced than the primitive Morudhain. The *Sagas of the Kilnbaden* mention the ‘people of the wastes’, whose ‘grim disregard for life’ could turn back or destroy the best-armed host. Agassius the Strong, in his *Relations of Campaign*, mentions crossing ‘a country inhabited by witches (with the power of) cursing the very land and beasts, turning their twisted country against travellers’. These accounts, though surely exaggerated, give a clear idea of how outsiders experienced encounters with the Morudhain and their realm.

In time, the Morudhain came to be masters of their land, spreading throughout the country and routing even the monsters and fiends that occupied it before. Most of the cairns, temples and villages they built in this age still stand today, most of them still inhabited by the descendants of those first, fierce, primitive Morudhain.

The Kingdom of Atha

Many lives of men past, when the Gods mated with the dragons of the World,

They produced offspring that were like men in appearance and age, though they were far our deepers in wisdom and Annha¹.

These offspring were truly the Children of the World, so they called themselves the Ataha or Ata, to indicate they were the True Children of the World.

Thus they called themselves when they climbed down the Great Mountain, when they climbed down from their Great Halls in the Sky;

Thus they called themselves when they (...) their great cities of silver and stone, and they built one below the Mountain, and another in the Heaven from which they came from, and another in the deep roots of Hell.

And they called their city (cities?) Atha and Ahamash and Archanarot.

And they were lords and masters of these great city/cities, and the lords of these city/cities were the rulers of the world and of the Moru during that time.

–Translated by Fiall Garnwynn from an unknown Morudhain source; *marked* words indicate an ambiguous or doubtful translation, as evidenced by later studies on Garnwynn’s drafts.

¹*Annha*: Untranslatable term, meaning something akin to – but not exactly – ‘the touch of higher spirits’; Morudhain used it to indicate a kind of spiritual rank among their kin, quite hard to define in the Common language.

More than 3,000 years before this writing, a mysterious civilisation flourished in the midst of Morudhain lands. They called themselves the Athans, apparently because they gave Mount Moru the name *Atha*, which may be translated as ‘Descended from Heaven’. It is unknown whether they were Morudhain or foreigners, though their highly advanced culture and science suggest they could not be related to the Morudhain, which were still savages at the time. However, if the Athans indeed came from outside, it is unknown how they got past the harsh Morudhain borders and arrived to Mount Moru, the very centre of the country; conversely, if they were of Morudhain blood, the question remains about how did they manage to ascend from a semi-barbaric state to such a sophisticated, advanced civilisation in only a couple of centuries, and also how or why did they descend back into barbarism hundreds of years later. Whatever the truth, there is evidence these people did build and maintain a great civilisation based on Mount Moru, from which they conquered the Morudhain barbarians, presumably by superior war tools, and ruled them – and the entire Morudhain Lands – for nearly a millennium. During this time, the Morudhain learned to work iron and even steel; they acquired advanced woodcraft and stonework knowledge and probably adopted the Athan’s advanced systems of currency and time measuring.

The Morudhain believed the Athans to have a divine origin, which might perhaps explain why such a proud and unconquerable race as the Morudhain did indeed submit to the Athans. According to historical records, as scarce and untrustworthy as they may be, the Athans did enslave the Morudhain, using them to build Athan cities, sacrificing them to Athan gods and burying large numbers of them alive as an escort to dead Athan rulers and priests. The Morudhain must have rebelled against this situation at least once, as evidenced by some fragments of Morudhain oral tradition:

*Our-Grandfather took up his sword,
And severed the hands of the Gods that tortured him;*

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*Then he and the men faced the Gods' army,
And fought them in battle and slew them;*

*Then they ran up and down the castle of the Gods,
And they sought the children slaves,
And they cut their chains and slew their owners,
And they beat the Gods' host in battle;*

*Then Our-Grandfather said,
'There! We are servants no more!'
And he led the children through dark tunnels,
Until they escaped the Castle of the Gods.*

—Excerpt from *Tales of Our-Grandfather*,
Morudhain oral tradition epic

*And it was during the years of the Great Freedom,
when we fought the demon-Gods at the Mountain of
Terror, that Padrach Pencobu was born...*

—Traditional introduction to the *Parable of Padrach
Pencobu*, one of the Morudhain's favourite folktales

*Everybody knows the Morudhain fought the Gods
to earn this land. That is why the Gods hate us. We
do not mind, though; it is all right. We understand
they hate us.*

—Old Smoke-Man

No more information exists about the coming of the Athans and how they built their kingdom, except for the actual ruins remaining inside Mount Moru and whatever could be gleaned from them; unfortunately, virtually all Athan ruins remain inside the most dangerous and inaccessible mountain amidst the most dangerous and inaccessible territory. Most of the explorers that have actually managed to enter Mount Moru to look for clues died in the attempt, or returned empty-handed because they did not dare to explore Mount Moru too deeply.

THE LOST CITY OF ARCHANEROTH

The few existing pieces of evidence about the Athan civilisation all concur their capital was the City of ArchanerOTH, a name that some sages have



decided to translate as ‘the Bridge between Heaven and Hell’ based on a specific interpretation of the archaic Athan language. This city was the political and economic centre of the whole Athan Kingdom, receiving tribute from all the Morudhain Lands and probably other realms as well. Stories tell the streets and buildings of Archaneroth were made from silver and jewels, which Athan sages extracted from the earth by secret arcane means. Nothing else is known about Archaneroth – except the history of its fall.

THE DRAGON LORD CULT

The Athans worshipped dragons, as frequently evidenced by their architecture and the extremely scarce vestiges of their written tradition. Historical evidence reveals the Morudhain did have a dragon cult predating the Athan civilisation, probably based on actual encounters with dragons; this primitive dragon worship may or may not have influenced the Athans’ later, more sophisticated dragon cult. The head of the Athans’ dragon cult was the Dragon Lord, a half-dragon, half-human deity that demanded blood, war and sacrifice but also knowledge and discovery. The cult lasted almost a millennium, exactly from the appearance of the Athan civilisation to its catastrophic fall. To date, many Morudhain refer to their dragon-god as ‘The Dragon Lord’; this is probably a reminder of the Athans’ cult, though it may also be the opposite.

(Found scribbled to one side of the original document): *Dragons MUST still roam the Moru – find one? ASK Him?*

THE DARK STRIFE

Around the 5th century of their Empire, the Athan civilisation faced its greatest ordeal before the Curse of the Gods (described later in this volume), in the form of a terrible war against the forces of the lower planes. Athan historians recorded these events as the Dark Strife, where the Athans’ mettle, their strength of arms and their very souls were put to the test.

It all began when the Athan priest-kings of the time decided to cast a great spell to enslave a powerful demon to do their bidding; thus they intended to ensure their continued power and their people’s well being at the expense of the dark powers. Their ritual succeeded, contrary to all expectations; their dark Dragon Lord, their god of death, sent them its own spawn, a creature formed of deepest evil, death and

darkness, called the Nightwalker, a demon whose power rivalled that of the mightiest gods of evil. The fell entity was ready to serve the Athan priest-kings that summoned it; however, they were frightened when they realised just what kind of fiend they had summoned and turned on the creature, attempting to lead it back to the darkness whence it had come. This caused the demon to lash out wrathfully against those impudent mortals; after a battle that lasted many days, all the Priest-kings were dead save one and the dark creature had returned to its evil realm, yet it plotted grim revenge against the betrayers. After only a few days, the Nightwalker broke into the mortal world with a host of demons and undead creatures under its command, moving against the Athan race in a hellish onslaught. During this first attack, which lasted a full 11 days, most of the time’s great Athan cities were laid waste by the demons. It was during this time that the Nightwalker was called the Scourge of Atha; it was said this destruction was a direct curse from the Dragon Lord, in payment for the treatment His dreadful son had received. After the initial slaughter, the Athans regained their strength and organised back against the invaders, using powerful magic to drive the demons back to Hell and destroy those that remained. The Nightwalker itself was vanquished on the steps of the great palace at the great city of Thatuar, when that same priest that had survived the first battle against it, now the Great Priest of Thatuar, sacrificed himself to destroy it. Some versions of the story say the great hero Cherlain (also mentioned in the *Song of Randhar*) was summoned to fight on behalf of the Athans with the promise of gold and glory; it is also said it was the wounds suffered in this combat which led to Cherlain’s later death as described in the well-known *Maionabeth* saga. According to these versions, Cherlain wielded a sword forged from the sun itself to keep the Nightwalker at bay, while the Great Priest of Tathuar gave himself to the monster in sacrifice and stabbed it with a spear as he was crushed to death. The weapon of the priest is also an object of much speculation – some say it was a blessed spear, specifically enchanted by the Old Gods; some maintain it was the severed horn of a unicorn, which the Great Priest sacrificed with that specific purpose. Curiously, a legend mirroring this one appears also in the annals of the Church of Iri of the Blessed Horn, the cult of the Unicorn God located beyond the Morudhain lands’ southern border. The version of the Church of Iri was that a ‘Dark Priest from a Dark Land’ had come to ask for the Unicorn

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God's greatest relic, for it was needed to save his people from the darkness. According to their own legend, they agreed to give their blessed artefact to this 'Dark Stranger' because 'the unicorn's healing power would touch its repentant soul and together they would vanquish evil'. Some sages debate it, while others have decided that this 'great relic' was the weapon used to finally vanquish the Nightwalker, while the Great Priest of Tathuar and the Irians' 'Dark Priest' were one and the same – the servant of evil whose ultimate repentance and purification came when he gave his own life to defeat evil, armed with a weapon of good.

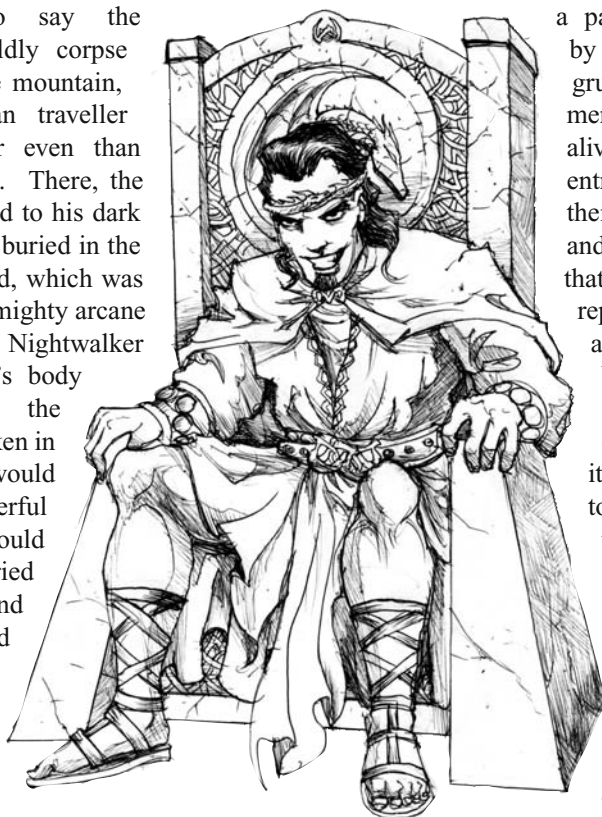
History goes on to say the Nightwalker's otherworldly corpse was taken far below the mountain, deeper than any Athan traveller had ever gone, deeper even than the bowels of the Earth. There, the Nightwalker was returned to his dark father, the Dragon Lord, buried in the very bottom of the World, which was also the roof of Hell. A mighty arcane seal was used to bury the Nightwalker there; once the demon's body was entombed below the ground, the seal was broken in three pieces so nobody would ever break the powerful binding magic that would keep the Nightwalker buried forever. These deeds and accounts are fully related in the excellent book *The Athaead*, by Savius Tormino of Ausagea.

LUEDHAIN AND AMAROS

During their years of slavery, the Morudhain had their own chief; a strong and popular patriarch, a skilled warrior and shrewd politician, called Luedhain. He is remembered with different names and varied descriptions, though all accounts seem to refer to the same person – a heroic figure, who assumed supreme leadership of the Morudhain nation after defeating all other clan chiefs in ritual battles. It was Luedhain who ruled the Morudhain during the fall of Archaneroth, and him who delivered his people from the Athans' yoke.

The legends of Luedhain had an antagonist, which legend called Amaros, the 'Dark Lord of Atha'. Many legends and folktales tell about the Athans and their dark empire, though few are as vivid and terrible as those telling of Amaros. This character was supposed to be a dark and mighty Athan King, which legend portrays as the greatest evil to ever appear in the world; he was often likened to the God of Evil itself. Amaros appeared as the token villain in every tale about Luedhain's deeds. The evil Athan King was credited with all kinds of foul deeds, from the subtly chilling (pregnant women buried alive a few minutes before giving birth, so both them and their helpless newborn would suffer

a painful, slow death consumed by despair) to the appallingly gruesome (accounts of captive men forced to flay themselves alive or to tie knots with their own entrails as they were pulled out of their bodies). Some sages suggest, and this writer is inclined to agree, that Amaros is intended to be a representation of evil rather than a real person. One cannot help but notice the possible root of 'Amaros' in *Ah Moru*, which could be translated as 'terror itself' in the ancient Athan tongue. Therefore, when tales tell of how Luedhain fought evil Amaros, it is most likely they simply intend to symbolise the eternal struggle of the Morudhain hero against the universal evil embodied by Athan domination.



THE CURSE OF THE GODS

For all the mystery surrounding the appearance and rise to power of the Athans, there are some clear accounts of their fall, significant and consistent enough to be trustworthy despite the obviously fictional element found in all of them.

The Athans were a bloodthirsty race by all accounts; their carvings and texts are full of descriptions of torture and sacrifice of many kinds, the stories about Dark King Amaros, mentioned earlier in this work, being a good example of such descriptions. Besides this, the Athans also gave in to all kinds of excesses; although the specific nature of their other sins varies

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depending on who is telling the tale. Suffice it to know the Athans were depicted as a degenerate, evil race beyond any kind of redemption. According to legend, this behaviour was not unnoticed by the Gods, who sent several warnings to the Athans to change their ways. The nature of these warnings is not clear, as the accounts vary from subtle images, such as thirteen omens given to the Athan sages of thirteen generations, to things such as seven celestial trumpets, booming Archaneroth's doom in clear view above the city. In any event, all legends coincide that Archaneroth was indeed cursed by the Gods and their rulers doomed to eternal punishment in Hell. However, the Athans sought to cheat on the Gods by blaming the fiends of the underworld for their own misdeeds – Appidus' excellent *Fable of Blame* illustrates this story as a moral lesson about blaming a 'nameless evil' for actions that you should answer for yourself. The story goes on to tell how the Gods obviously saw through the Athans' ruse, only now the forces of evil were also angry with them for their craven duplicity. Therefore, the Gods of both good and evil signed a pact to punish Archaneroth and put an end to its sinful ways.

Then Archaneroth fell, and with it the entire Athan Kingdom.

Again, the details are vague; the only point of agreement being that Archaneroth was completely destroyed. The most fanciful accounts maintain it was whisked away to Hell, losing all its former ties to both Paradise and the Mortal World; the most realistic hold the city was razed to the ground and its ruins can still be found somewhere inside Mount Moru. However, nobody has ever found these ruins, so the true fate of Archaneroth shall remain a secret.

FALL OF THE ATHAN KINGDOM

After the destruction of Archaneroth, the Kingdom of Atha was left in disarray, its armies leaderless and its cities neglected; several internal wars erupted, where the surviving Athan warlords all over Mount Moru fought each other for domination. It was during these years that the Morudhain, led by the chief and patriarch Luedhain, swept back against the Athans with the force of a tidal wave and all the fury of their accumulated racial hate. The Athans, already weakened by their civil war and divine curse, could not resist the barbarian onslaught and either died by Morudhain sword or retreated into

the depths of Mount Moru, from which they never came out again. By the following century, nothing remained of the Athan Civilisation but some ruined sites, hidden in the dark warrens of Mount Moru.

The Morudhain Age

After the fall of Archaneroth, the Morudhain slowly reclaimed the Moru Country, leaving behind all traces of Athan domination and rebuilding their culture from the Athans' ruins. They soon resumed their previous lifestyle as survivalist tribes, dredging out a living from the Morudhain waste – a dreary life to be sure, but it was their own life again.

LUEDHAIN'S LAST TRIP

During the first few centuries after the war, not all Morudhain were content with returning to their villages, now the Athan Kingdom was theirs for the taking; therefore, several clans entered Mount Moru to take over and rebuild the Athan's ruins. The first of the clan chiefs to attempt this was Luedhain himself, who proclaimed himself the new ruler of Archaneroth and led a force of 2,000 Morudhain to the depths of Mount Moru, searching for the Athans' capital city. Nobody ever saw Luedhain again, which ended the legend of the greatest Morudhain chieftain of all time. Some Morudhain bards told how he had returned to the celestial realm that birthed him; some tell a tragic tale of his death against a dragon of the depths; some believe he achieved his goal and found Archaneroth, where he still rules, immortal and mighty as the greatest Athan kings. Finally, some sages saw Luedhain's disappearance as a bad omen, and decided Mount Moru was cursed.

THE COLONISATION OF MOUNT MORU

In time, other clan chiefs followed Luedhain's footsteps, the less ambitious looking for a suitable Athan city to take over, the more ambitious searching for their lost chieftain and Archaneroth itself. They were much less lucky than they thought – most of them wandered for years or even decades before finding a meagre, almost unusable ruined site; the monsters living in the Mount Moru grottos slaughtered those that failed. The few that managed to fulfil their goal and rebuild an Athan city were forced to fight to defend their domains from Athan survivors *and* other Morudhain clans, in endless domination wars just like the ones that contributed to destroy the Athan Kingdom years before. The survivors of these wars, cut off from the outside

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world and forced to learn to survive in a hostile underground environment, were unable to sustain a peaceful life below Mount Moru and had to leave the cities they had found, either returning to the outside world as a dying clan or disappearing forever in the depths of the Mount. In the end, the Morudhain's attempt at colonising Mount Moru caused almost as many deaths as their war against the Athans. It did not take long for Morudhain sages to declare Mount Moru a 'place of terror', where no free man should ever set foot again under pain of terrible curses; even now, after a thousand years, it is still forbidden for the Morudhain to enter Mount Moru.

THE TRIBAL WARS

After the failed attempt at retaking Mount Moru, the Morudhain returned to their previous barbaric lifestyle, though this time they were much better prepared to survive, having kept many secrets learned from their Athan masters such as iron working. They kept their ancestral hunting and agricultural habits, as well as their primitive traditional architecture, yet they managed to survive many centuries in their merciless environment. However, the aborted conquest of Mount Moru had left an unexpected legacy – during the search for Athan ruins, many Morudhain clans had turned on each other, in a bloody competition for the lost Athan cities and treasures. The blood feuds that appeared during that time had endured among the surviving clans, causing the Morudhain to be more divided than ever before. Soon, small skirmishes for the barren land and its meagre resources began to break all over the Morudhain territory. The situation escalated when many clan leaders rose up, each of them claiming to be the true successor of Luedhain and attempting to rule the entire Morudhain nation in his stead. The other clans violently opposed each of these upstarts, and soon there was an all-out tribal war raging through the Morudhain territory. The wars never truly ended; instead, they slowly dwindled and lost momentum, until the Morudhain were left like they had been before – leaderless, scattered, bitter – only their numbers were greatly reduced now. Many great leaders came to power during that time, founding the Morudhain tribes that survive to this day.

DECLINE OF THE MORUDHAIN

During the past few centuries, several factors have contributed to weaken the Morudhain race, slowly bringing their numbers to less than half their former population. The tribal wars still rage on sporadically

and, even though they lack their initial strength, they still cause thousands of deaths each year, severely impairing the Morudhain's ability to survive against their harsh environment. Besides the raging tribal wars, the nation has suffered several calamities within the last centuries, including famine and two sweeping plagues. With each passing year, the Morudhain become more vulnerable to the Moru Country's unforgiving environment and merciless predators. There is no mistake – the Morudhain are dying out. The present and future of their people look as bleak and infertile as their realm and there is little anyone can do about it but grimly endure – and live on...

Gods of the Morudhain Lands

I asked if the gods existed. The gods answered, 'we do not'.

–Extract from Fiall Garnwynn's poem *I Asked if the Gods Existed*

In the beginning, when the gods were, mortals were not.

They got together in the world, the Nine Deathless Ones;

They walked freely as Gods because there was no death in the world.

They created the earth and the rock and the heavens.

They created the worm and the bird and the wolf.

And then the wolf ate the bird and killed it, and the wolf choked and died;

And then the worm feasted on the carcass, and he said 'Death'.

There was Death in the world then, so the Deathless had to leave;

They went back to the cauldron and left their lesser children behind;

The children of the Deathless – Those-With-Death.

Those-with-Death hated the worm and spat and defecated on it;

They hated it because he had said 'Death'; and they chased it away;

And the worm crawled into the mountain and below the earth,

It went to the fire-earth, and there it lived and it never returned.

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

But it said; 'I said 'Death', so Those-With-Death are my children'.

Thus it is that we still hate the worm, thus it is that we are its children.

–Morudhain oral tradition (translated by Fiall Garnwynn)

The gods of the Morudhain Lands are quite grim, no more concerned about the lives of mortals than the harsh elements they represent. They rarely interfere with their worshippers' lives, be it to harm or help them. Before we brought the worship of Iri of the Blessed Horn to the Moru Country, local folk did not dare to expect their gods to take part in their affairs; their deities are simply capricious forces of nature, doing as they please with the world and those living on it. We are still struggling to attract the natives to our flock and although we have had a modest measure of success with the southern tribes, most of the other Morudhain, as well as all the non-humans in the area, prefer to live without hope than change their worship and thus risk the wrath of their fearsome deities ...

–Father Noelio of the Blessed Horn (interviewed about the state of the church in his area)

Ancient Gods

*Witness now the Gods of the endless gulf!
Praise the abyss of their eyes, the strength of their limbs,
The myriad cold lights shining in their darkness!
I deliver myself from sanity and truth!
I embrace you!*

–Athan Psalm (reproduced by kind permission of the Aochiah Library)

The Athans had a vast and complex divine pantheon, from which the Morudhain derived their own collection of pagan deities. Some scholars insist that it was the other way around, that the Athans developed their advanced deities from the Morudhain pantheon, which makes no sense at all considering the enormous social and religious advantages of the Athan culture over that of its neighbours. The Athan gods were true gods of darkness, light, heaven and sacrifice, which Athan and Morudhain alike revered and feared beyond their own understanding.

–Master Valudio Valdassino, *Treatise on Old Religions* (excerpt)

Most of the old gods are forgotten now, except perhaps for the Dragon Lord. I should know; I cannot forget him either.

–Fiall Garnwynn, *A Goodbye*

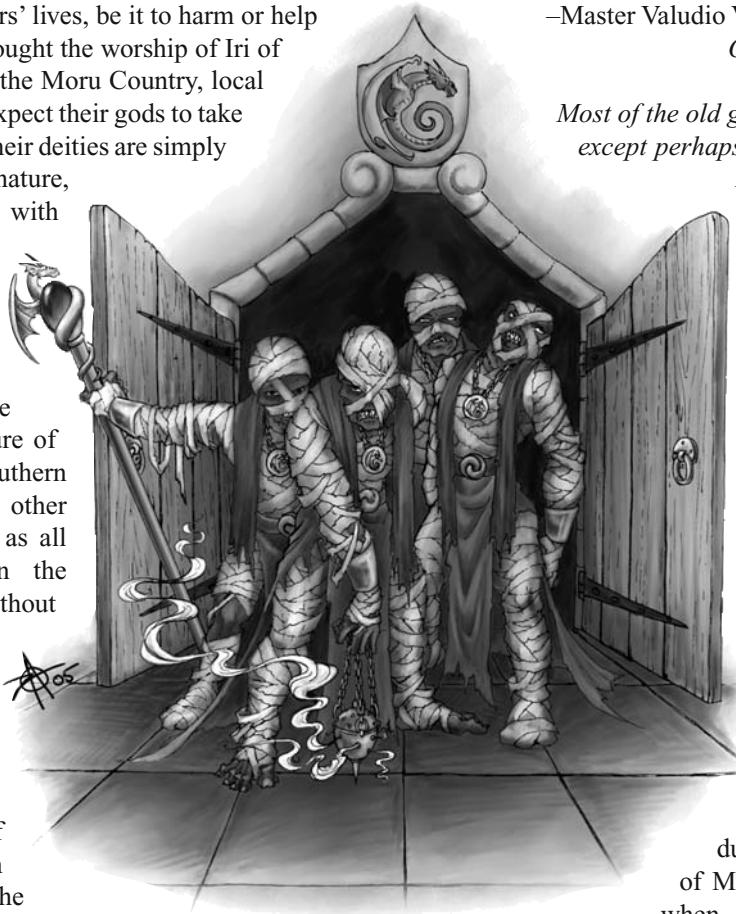
THE CULT OF THE CAVE

The gaping maw is open. Darkness waits.

–Ancient Morudhain chant

The Spirit of the Cave was a very important god, perhaps even a greater power, during the early days of Morudhain colonisation, when the tribesmen still dressed in uncured animal hides and

depended on natural caverns for shelter. As all early Morudhain gods, he was unfathomably merciless, crushing and devouring the souls of his worshippers as often as giving them protection. The elements of the Cave's shelter, a sturdy ceiling of stone and a gaping mouth of darkness, slowly became a symbol of the entrance of Hell, somehow indicating the Morudhain believed they had come to seek refuge in the mouth of evil itself. Worship of the Cave waned as the Morudhain acquired advanced building techniques; in fact, the Cave spirit was



THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

soon relegated to the status of a minor demon, as the Morudhain left behind the days when they had been forced to seek shelter at its dark mouth. To this day, the Cave has all but disappeared from the Morudhain pantheon – however, many Morudhain still leave a discreet offering before taking shelter inside a dark cave. More so, a clandestine religious sect has taken up the worship again, calling itself the Cult of the Cave and dedicating extremely dark rites to their revived god.

THE SPIRIT OF THE CAVE

Gaping Maw of Darkness, the Open Mouth

Lesser Deity

Symbol: An open cave mouth

Home Plane: The Dark Cave

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Portfolio: Darkness, depths, disappearance, hunger, stone

Worshippers: Explorers, giants, travellers, underground creatures

Cleric Alignments: CN, N, NE, CE

Domains: Death, Earth, Evil, Travel, Protection

Favoured Weapon: ‘Crushing Darkness’ (greatclub)

The spirit of the cave rarely appears as a living being; instead, it is usually depicted as a great dark cave, the mouth of which is vaguely shaped like a monster’s jaws. On the rare occasions the Spirit of the Cave is given a different avatar, it is usually a naked, gigantic humanoid made entirely of shadows, using a great oblong rock as a greatclub. The Spirit of the Cave invites mortals to his dark realm, where they are protected from nature but vulnerable to the Cave’s own dark hunger.

Dogma

The Dark Cave represents the Entrance to Hell; it gives protection in exchange for souls. Its followers are expected to give sacrifice to the hungry dark forces below the world; this sacrifice usually takes the form of livestock or even people. In exchange, the Cave provides the shelter of stone, where the elements can harm its followers, and of darkness, where no eyes can find them.

Clergy and Temples

The new Cult of the Dark Cave is much more organised – and more evil – than the primitive worship of the ancient Morudhain. It is most popular among underground nonhuman folk such as

deep gnomes and stone giants. Clerics of the Cult set up their homes in dark natural caves, preferably close to some incredibly deep, unexplored tunnel. All great, unknown depths are sacred sites for the Cult; its ‘temples’ are the arcane runes and symbols carved on the entrance and floor of these sacred caves. There, worshippers enact rites of adoration and sacrifice, where they give thanks to the Cave for accepting their offerings and protecting them. Clerics of the Cult dress in dark hides, wearing no holy symbols except for the great stone clubs they carry. They oversee the sacrifices and offerings made to the Cave, and are always charged with interpretation of the Spirit’s messages.

THE DRAGON LORD

Historical reports abound about the ‘God that was not a God’ of the Athan pantheon, probably based on the symbolic Old Dragon of Morudhain lore. Rather than a deity, the Old Dragon was a primal, almighty monster, figuring in the pantheon as an enemy of the gods; a twisted force of nature representing chaos and timeless evil, rather than a deity itself. The Athan sacred scriptures (the few that have been recovered) speak of the ‘Ancient Lord of Gods’, a great worm (wurm) that embodied death and ancient power. Later texts refer to the ‘Dragon Lord’ as a manlike figure, suggesting a shapeshifting avatar.

–Andwar Bacchi, *Studies on Athan Mythology*

The Athans worshipped not a God, but death itself.

–Fiall Garnwynn, *Notes*

The Dragon Lord was undoubtedly the most important deity of the Athan pantheon during the nine centuries of their civilisation. Any researcher of Athan culture should be well acquainted with the coiled dragon symbol, carved in countless ruins and artefacts found below Mount Moru. The Dragon Lord was credited with creating humanity and bringing death to the world, a power the Athans respected above everything else. Thus, they loved their god of mortality as much as they loved their dead, their past and their legends. Details about the Dragon Lord’s worship are scarce, as the cult disappeared with the fall of the Athan culture; however, most of my colleagues agree the coiled dragon of the Athans is quite reminiscent of the crude spiral sign representing the Morudhain’s Old Dragon, suggesting a relation between both deities,

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

far greater than mere coincidence. For the Athans, the Dragon Lord was a patriarchal figure: a father of their race, who lived below the mountain and saw for their welfare in exchange for terrible sacrifices. He represented both timelessness and dark power, according to the ancient texts where he is often referred to as 'The Undying Tyrant'. As a side note, legend has it great winged reptiles were seen in the Athan cities during the Dragon Lord's worship, which could indicate the cult involved some kind of relation to real dragons. Some sages even suggest (*Here the original text by Fiall Garnwynn is interrupted; for some reason, he never got to finish it, though he later wrote considerably more about the Morudhain gods. What he intended to write after the last phrase is a mystery; nobody asked him about it while he lived and no living researcher has dared speculate on it to this day. The original text is presented in its entirety, including the paragraph Garnwynn never finished, for the sake of completeness.*).

THE DRAGON LORD

*The Great Patriarch,
Great Wyrm of Death,
Lord of the Mountain
Roots, The Undying Tyrant*

Greater Deity

Symbol: A coiling dragon

Home Plane: The Wyrm
Caves

Alignment: Neutral
evil

Portfolio: Death,
divine power,
embalming,
eternity, forbidden
lore, immortality and
mortality

Worshippers: Architects, assassins, Athans, bearers of secret knowledge, healers, necromancers, ritual killers, sages

Cleric Alignments: CE, NE, LE

Domains: Death, Evil, Knowledge, Magic

Favoured Weapon: Sceptre of Eternity
(morningstar)

The Dragon Lord is depicted as a Great Wyrm dragon of undefined type, the colour of earth and ashes, and

also as a richly garbed man, with a crown and sceptre marking him as a true king. His goals are to wrest the power of death from the other gods and give it to mortals, so they can impart death or take it away at their whim, as it is their right. To this purpose, he is particularly happy to grant necromantic and life-restoring powers, as his goal is to ultimately create a reign of absolute death in the universe.

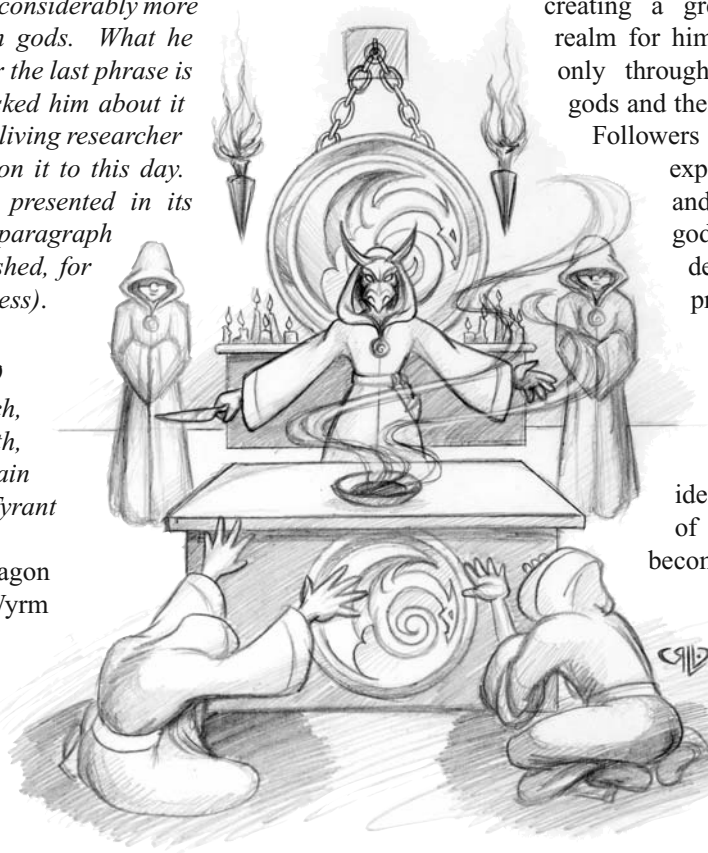
Dogma

As the Great Wyrm of Death, The Dragon Lord seeks to ultimately destroy the powers of time and life, devouring all that is alive and vulnerable and creating a great timeless, immortal realm for him and his followers, for only through death can the other gods and their creation be destroyed.

Followers of the Dragon Lord are expected to despise creation and time, challenging the gods that believe life and death are solely their province. True followers of the Dragon Lord do not reject an undead existence, as it is close to their ethos; however, the ultimate ideal of any true worshipper of the Dragon Lord is to become at least as powerful as a demigod.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of the Dragon Lord build great, ostentatious stone temples, where they lead a life of contemplation upon death and time, and observe necromantic rites such as embalming, sacrifice and undead creation. They dress in dull black robes, adorned with golden, cobalt or red motifs. They always bear the Dragon Lord's holy symbol, be it on their clothing, a pendant and/or pieces of jewellery such as bracelets or tiaras. The Athans respected death more than life, so their temples and graves were always greater than their houses and palaces.



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THE LORDS OF DEATH

Some accounts of Athan history and folklore reveal an obscure and almost forgotten cult, worshipping to a cabal of dark deities known as the Thirteen Lords of Death. Forgotten by the second century of the Athan dominion, they once occupied the place later held by the Dragon Lord, as the patrons of death in the Athan pantheon. The Thirteen Lords are seen depicted in ceremonial earthenware, weapons and furniture, all of it dating from the earliest stages of the Athan culture, before the worship of the Dragon Lord reached its apex. It is possible the Thirteen Lords were in fact the original Athan pantheon, relegated to lesser death gods after adoption of newer deities; it is also suggested they might have been thirteen mortal kings whose deeds or power caused them to be remembered as gods, albeit lesser ones. In any event, it may be assumed the Thirteen Lords were the Athans' death gods until the arrival of the Dragon Lord, who defeated and not only replaced them but also took over the throne of the Athan pantheon.

THE LORDS OF DEATH

The Thirteen Lords

Demigods (Worshipped as a single Lesser Deity)

Symbol: A crown with thirteen points

Home Plane: The Graveyard Halls

Alignment: Neutral evil

Portfolio: Ashes to ashes, burial, death, dust to dust, necromancy, undead

Worshippers: Ancient Athans

Cleric Alignments: NE, LE

Domains: Death, Destruction, Earth, Evil

Favoured Weapon: 'The Staff of Death' (quarterstaff)

The Lords of Death appear as 13 black-robed skeletons, with crowns and jewellery of the purest gold. They carry no weapons, their merest touch being deadly enough. The right hand of one of the Lords of Death can reduce any living creature to dust; his left hand can cause corpses to rise again as undead. The Lords of Death constantly strive to replace living beings with undead creatures; their worshippers are expected to learn the necromantic arts to further this goal.

Dogma

For the Lords of Death, life is an aberration and a mistake; since everything in the universe dies, then

death is the natural state of the cosmos and it should be brought about as fast as possible. A true follower of the Lords of Death does not fear death but expects it to come, respecting the dead more than the living for their greater wisdom and fewer emotional weaknesses.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of the Lords of Death should be well versed in the necromantic arts, functioning as healers, embalmers and undertakers as well as priests. Their temples are usually located on – or at least near – graveyards, mausoleums and other places of ceremonial burial. There, priests conduct death rites, as well as undead raising magic. Clerics of the Lords of Death dress in dark brown robes and wear no ornaments except for their holy symbols, which often take the form of simple brass crowns.

THE OLD GODS

Several ancient texts recovered from Athan ruins refer to a group of gods, of which nothing is known except they were 'The Old Gods'. No clue is given about their exact number, no record exists of their individual names; they were simply 'The Gods' and were referred to as such in legend and scripture. Perhaps these gods used to be the first Athan Pantheon, replaced by Morudhain deities or by the Dragon Lord; perhaps these 'Old Gods' were actually the Morudhain deities themselves, given an impersonal, multiparty appearance by Athan accounts. At any rate, the Athan version refers to the Old Gods as a group of fair and lawful deities of great power, which 'justly opposed' the Dragon Lord; a strange choice of words, considering the Dragon Lord was the Athans' principal deity. In fact, upon closer study of Athan sacred texts it would appear the Old Gods were only mentioned as 'the ones that opposed the Dragon Lord', and never appeared in legend except to give the Dragon Lord some kind of antagonist. In any case there seems to be no doubt that, whoever the Old Gods were, it was them who cursed and destroyed the City of Archanerorth, the capital city of the Athans. This fact is not recounted in Athan legend, since the Athan civilisation crumbled and disappeared immediately afterwards; however, if it really happened, and the Old Gods were truly the rivals of the Athans' Dragon Lord, it would leave little doubt about who won in the end.

The Church of Iri

The Church of the Blessed Horn is arguably the most widespread and civilised religion in the Morudhain area. The Church centres on the worship of the unicorn-god Iri of the Blessed Horn, a benevolent spirit of hope and light; it is the official religion in the Meadowvale area, and has even gained a few adepts among the grim Morudhain, particularly the southern tribes. Normally, the intolerant Morudhain see anything belonging to the outside world with suspicion and hostility; however, the worship of the unicorn closely resembled strong elements of their folklore, which portrays unicorns as truly divine spirits. This has allowed the church of Iri to penetrate where no foreign culture had penetrated before, despite coming not from the Moru Country but from lands far away to the south.

IRI OF THE BLESSED HORN

Worship of Iri of the Blessed Horn appeared first among the Oriatha, a race of purely half-elven stock from the southern forests of Eaelindor. The Oriatha called the unicorn Iri, which means 'centre' in their language; meaning the point of the unicorn horn, the centre of the spiral, is also the centre of life and creation. The Oriatha taught the worship of Iri to their human neighbours, which called their god 'Iri of the Blessed Horn' and turned him from a deified nature spirit into a god of piety, purity and compassion, represented by the virile, firm shaft of his spiral horn. The humans that settled south of the Moru Country and founded Meadowvale there did worship Iri, as evidenced by the Last Shrine located a few miles from Meadowvale itself. After a few decades, the belief started spreading, as many Morudhain recognised their own unicorn spirits in the god Iri.

IRI OF THE BLESSED HORN

Centre of Creation, The Horn of Truth, The Unicorn God

Intermediate Deity

Symbol: A unicorn horn

Home Plane: The First Forest

Alignment: Neutral good

Portfolio: Defeat evil, disperse darkness, light, oneness, pierce dark secrets, purity, truth

Worshippers: Good-aligned clerics, good-aligned rangers, paladins,

Cleric Alignments: LG, NG, CG

Domains: Destruction, good, knowledge, sun
Favoured Weapon: The Horn of Light (lance)

Most often, Iri appears as a shining unicorn's horn, with the ability to transform into an unending beam of light. This light has the power to pierce any darkness and run through any evil. Iri is also often depicted as a glorious, radiant unicorn; this divine beast prefers to dwell in his own realm of goodness but is always ready to assist mortals with his unending light. Iri's light always pierces evil and darkness, regardless of his enemy's power or how deep he is hidden. Once set into action, the unicorn god is always true, always firm and always unyielding in his purpose; yet, he is also a creature of compassion and kindness, which prefers peace to fighting, even if it is against the forces of evil. For Iri, purity and wisdom are more valuable than strength and bravery.

Dogma

Evil can only thrive in secret, hidden in darkness; that is why the horn of Iri is a weapon of light and a tool of revelation. Iri is not a hunter of evil, though he lends his revealing horn to deserving mortals that face darkness. Despite Iri's naturally peaceful nature, his horn can be a fearsome weapon when wielded against the forces of evil. Followers of Iri are not expected to be relentless hunters of evil; however, they must always be alert and discerning, able to recognise evil under any guise and see the truth through any darkness; this is usually enough to disperse evil and leave the enemy powerless.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of Iri live in seclusion, as their ethos demands a meditative, retiring lifestyle to maintain a clear and quiet mind. They dress in white robes with golden holy symbols sewn on. The most belligerent among the order are fully armoured under these robes, and carry war lances carved in the shape of unicorn horns. Their temples are plain edifices of white stone, with no ornaments save for the depictions of Iri's Blessed Horn. Priests live in bare rooms just outside the building; some even camp out in the open, thus reinforcing their ascetic lifestyle and their contact with nature. Clerics of Iri rarely hold public acts such as masses or civic ceremonies, preferring discreet rituals and imparting their teachings via well-intentioned, thoughtful philosophy, rather than plain doctrine. As the ethos of Iri says, the best way to show the truth is to let others see it on their own.

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

Morudhain Pantheon

*Then the Gods came together and struck each other;
And immortal blood poured like river from their wounds;
And the blood touched the ground, and the ground was alive;
All things grew from the Gods' immortal blood;
All things except for mortal men,
For mortal men were born from Death.*

—Morudhain oral tradition (translated by Fiall Garnwynn)

*These are the gods of earth and sky
These are the people from Ah Bennwyn;
These are the people that cannot die,
These are the gods from Ah Bennwyn.*

*Take me with you, beyond pain and grief,
Take me with you when this sorrow is done;
Take me with you, because I believe
I shall live better in your Ah Bennwyn.*

—Morudhain chant (translated by the Royal Researchers of Manderachi)

The Morudhain worship a collection of grim, primal gods of nature, magic and lore. This is a very primitive religion, where deities are closer to nature spirits than to some complex divine hierarchy. However, they are not simple natural forces; each Morudhain god represents several concepts and elements, being almost a dramatic character rather than just a symbol of something. These gods have been a part of Morudhain folklore since time out of mind; nobody knows when or how they appeared or why the Morudhain started worshipping them. Some sages liken the Morudhain pantheon to the unidentified 'Old Gods' of the Athans; this would mean the Morudhain gods not only predated the Athan pantheon but were also the creators of the very Athan race. However, this is still a point of disagreement among scholars. It is unlikely we shall ever discover the origin of the Morudhain gods, mostly because their worshippers have no written language, no historical records and no desire at all to share their ancient folklore with us.

The Morudhain gods live in an otherworldly realm called the *Abannion*, which could be translated as 'True Death' or 'More than Death'. Mortals would

perceive the Abannion as a realm of gloom, ashes and darkness; for the gods it is a place of quiet, rest and beauty. What mortals see as desolation and terror, the gods see as paradise. When the Morudhain die, they are taken to the Abannion, 'where they ultimately learn to value what they had in life'. I think there is a great symbolic meaning to this grim, heartless legend, though not one civilised men are quite ready to accept.

MAHUA THE MOTHER

Mahua the Mother was probably the first deity of the Morudhain pantheon; she is mentioned in the earliest stories and appears depicted in the oldest carvings and relics. Mahua first appeared as a nature deity; then she came to be depicted as an earth mother goddess, to which the Morudhain turned mostly for fertility and seasonal rites. Although the Morudhain pantheon has no formal leadership, Mahua has always been considered more or less their chief, like the matriarch of a great family; in fact, according to some tales Mahua is actually the mother of half the pantheon (Seadhann, Ehina, Gamageth and even of the Old Dragon). The continued prominence of a goddess of earth and fertility in such a barren land is a mystery to some scholars; this writer believes she is a representation of the Morudhain's ability to endure, hope and survive.

MAHUA THE MOTHER

Matriarch of the Gods, The Stern Nurse

Greater Deity

Symbol: A pregnant woman

Home Plane: The Abannion

Alignment: Neutral

Portfolio: Agriculture, blood, earth, endurance, fertility, fruits, motherhood, pain, procreation

Worshippers: Druids, farmers, mothers, virgin maidens

Cleric Alignments: Any

Domains: Death, Earth, Plant, Protection

Favoured Weapon: The shaft of life (spear)

Mahua the Mother looks as a plump, naked female giant, apparently made entirely of earth and mud. She is also depicted as a pregnant human woman, carrying a wooden spear. She walks the earth looking for a proper seed; when she finds it, she retreats to her cave in Abannion and bears the children of the world. Thus were born animals, plants and all the things that grow from the earth.

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

Dogma

Mahua believes in pain and suffering as a means to give life, as indicated by the labour pains she inflicts on all Morudhain mothers and the toil she imposes on all Morudhain farmers. Followers of Mahua are expected to survive, thrive and create even in the harshest environment.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of Mahua dress in hides or plain cloth, wearing no symbols other than green and red body paint. They live as members of Morudhain communities, conducting seasonal rituals and helping with community tasks such as harvesting or foraging. There are no formal temples erected to Mahua, though a cave may be specially consecrated to her by building a ceremonial mound and inscribing her fertility symbols on the walls and floor.

CRANNOCH OF THE SPEAR

The cult of Crannoch of the Spear appeared shortly after that of Mahua the Mother, with Crannoch being portrayed as Mahua's male counterpart – usually her brother or her husband, sometimes also her son. Where Mahua represents the stern, earth-bound matriarch of pain and toil, Crannoch is a god of impetus, power and whim. Worship of Crannoch began when the Morudhain gave a name and a face to the elemental forces of sky and thunder; the god went on to become a sort of warlord of the Morudhain pantheon, consort and counterpart to Mahua the Mother.

CRANNOCH OF THE SPEAR

Father of the Sky, The Spear of Thunder

Greater Deity

Symbol: A lightning spear

Home Plane: The Abannion

Alignment: Chaotic good

Portfolio: The sky, storms, virility, war, weather

Worshippers: Farmers, fighters, hunters, rangers, warriors

Cleric Alignments: CG, CN, N

Domains: Air, Strength, War

Favoured Weapon: The Lightning Spear (spear)

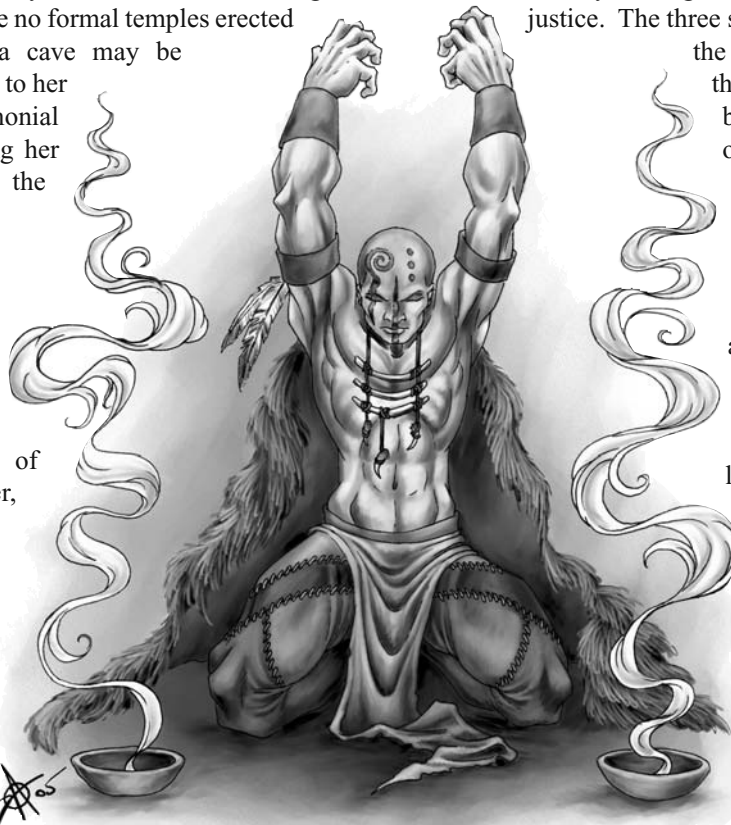
Crannoch is an aggressive, passionate god. He is a noble warrior and a champion of good causes, though he is also boorish, violent and quick-tempered. He is as likely to be found lusting after maidens as valiantly rushing a superior foe for glory or justice. The three sounds Crannoch loves

the most are booming thunder, the clash of battle and the laughter of women. Crannoch appears as a muscular bearded man, with long red hair and piercing blue eyes. He is clad in nothing but a gold scarf and bronze helmet; he wields a spear that appears made of forged lightning. He fears Mahua as much as he loves her, for he knows she is mightier and wiser than him; however, Mahua allows him to lead the gods in her stead, for she knows they need his spirit and bravery – as long as he behaves. Many

tales tell of how Mahua has a habit of devouring Crannoch and then regurgitating him back to life just to teach him a lesson.

Dogma

Crannoch is a patron of male energy; he encourages mortal men to be brave, spirited and resolute, to fight without fear and love without reserve. He is also a capricious weather god, with the power of raining his terrible wrath upon those that displease him. Crannoch is always watching battles, as he



THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

has a special preference for warriors. When matters need his involvement, he rushes into the fray without hesitation, singing a battle-song for those that fight or die bravely.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of Crannoch are expected to plead for good weather for the community. Clerics of Crannoch are almost always strong, healthy men, with at least some knowledge of the martial trade. Female clerics are not commonly allowed into the order, unless they reject their very womanhood forever – such as by keeping a chastity vote, for example – and agree to be regarded as males by the rest of the tribe. Crannoch's clerics live as normal members of their community, though they spend long periods of seclusion in certain caves or houses, consecrated to Crannoch and his followers. During these periods, clerics of Crannoch hold hunting ceremonies, coming-of-age rites and they teach battle songs and fighting techniques to young Morudhain men. The armour and clothing of a cleric of Crannoch must be the colour of bronze or gold; most of them carry spears and shields.

OLD CREOMAHN

Old Creomahn is one of the most mysterious members of the Morudhain pantheon in many ways. As a god, his portfolio is somewhat ambiguous and puzzling; as a character, none of the other gods can claim to truly know or understand him; as a myth, his presence in the Morudhain pantheon is unexplained as is the origin of his worship. Many Morudhain folktales refer to him, though, featuring him as a prominent member of the pantheon. He seems to function mainly as an advisor god, to which other deities come for counsel or warning. Salego of Tomaria suggests, in his *Morudhain Lore* – and I am inclined to agree despite my poor opinion on Tomaria's work and personal quality – that Old Creomahn is a deification of the riddle as a universal force; that he represents mystery itself. Legend has it he lives inside 'the Mountain of Terror beyond Abannwn', which would suggest he is not a resident of the Abannion as other gods are, but instead lives in the mortal plane, quite probably in Mount Moru itself.

OLD CREOMAHN

God of the Mountain, Guardian of the Depths

Intermediate Deity

Symbol: A mountain

Home Plane: The Abannion/unknown

Alignment: Neutral

Portfolio: Darkness, deep places, mountains, mystery, old age, time, wisdom

Worshippers: Arcane spellcasters, elders, mountaineers, riddlers, sages, scholars, underground explorers

Cleric Alignments: N, LN, NE

Domains: Earth, Knowledge, Law, Magic, Trickery

Favoured Weapon: 'The Staff of Sages' (quarterstaff)

Old Creomahn's true form is unknown, though it is universally agreed that he must look as an incredibly old man, with steely grey eyes and a long grizzled mane and beard, dressed in a long black robe; this is at least his favourite guise and the one he uses most frequently. However, Old Creomahn is able to take any shape and appear as anything; he usually takes the form of whatever will help him deliver a message more clearly or help others to understand his advice. His favourite forms are that of a Large (or larger) grizzled raven, a middle-aged, bearded man with silvery hair and a talking skull. He sits in his mountain waiting for other gods and heroes to seek him for counsel or omens. It is said Old Creomahn knows everything but he always demands a sacrifice from those that look for his advice. He is also called upon to protect lost secrets or treasures, specially those hidden below the earth.

Dogma

Old Creomahn's dogma is unknown, or at the very least unclear; he seems to live for nothing but presenting riddles, omens and clues, though he is also a staunch defender of secret and mystery. His followers are expected to hide and protect sacred places and objects, and to give advice to others, the more cryptic the better.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of Old Creomahn cannot be young – only middle-aged and older humans are allowed into the order. This causes most of his clerics to have a former profession, usually wizards or scholars. Clerics of Creomahn must dress in black and carry ceremonial staves carved with special symbols. They are charged with their tribe's knowledge and secrets, as well as with giving their advice to settle disputes and act as a source of information at all times. There is a strong rivalry between the clerics of Old Creomahn and those of Seadann, given their radically different approaches to knowledge.

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

SEADANN OF THE SONG

More than any other of the Morudhain gods, Seadann truly represents the spirit and outlook of his people. His worship developed hand in hand with the Morudhain culture and folklore, until he became the embodiment of all Morudhain traditions and customs. He is not as powerful as Mahua or Crannoch, though he is doubtlessly the best loved and most worshipped, as he represents what makes the Morudhain what they are – their values, their history and their art.

SEADANN OF THE SONG

Brother of Men, The Talespinner, Voice of Wood

Intermediate Deity

Symbol: A willow mandolin

Home Plane: The Abannion

Alignment: Chaotic good

Portfolio: Culture, folklore, gathering, history, performing, racial identity, songs

Worshippers: Bards, druids, orators, performers, sages, scholars

Cleric Alignments: CG, CN, NG, N

Domains: Knowledge, Luck, Magic, Travel

Favoured Weapon: 'Fahna Fahlwdd' (short sword)

Seadann of the Song appears as a handsome bearded man, with long golden-auburn hair, dressed in bright colours, with a deep and thoughtful gaze that betrays his lively façade. He is usually telling or singing a story, mandolin in hand; in fact he exists to keep alive the spirit of Morudhain culture by spreading its stories, legends and traditions. Legend maintains there are few things as inspiring in the universe as a battle song or rousing speech from Seadann.

Dogma

Seadann is a guardian and patron of the arts, crafts and traditions of the Morudhain people and it is his duty to keep them in the people's memory. When everything else fails, when things seem to fall apart, when calamity strikes, all the Morudhain need to do is to remember Seadann; he shall remind them of who they are and return hope to their hearts. Seadann's worshippers are expected to follow his example and serve as an inspiration to their people, making sure to spread their traditions and always remind other Morudhain of their own cultural identity.

Clergy and Temples

Virtually all of Seadann's clerics are of Morudhain stock; he does not reject priests of other races though he does require them to respect and spread the Morudhain culture. Clerics of Seadann dress in red and gold, usually eschewing tunics and robes in favour of more comfortable or flamboyant clothes. Seadann requires no special place of worship except for the campfire and no sacred sites except for libraries.

EHINA THE EMBER

An ember flashes. A goddess dances.

—Anonymous

When the fireplace flickers; when the men gather round and the night is warm; when the drinks are down and the hearts are up; that is the hour of Ehina, the Morudhain goddess of love and fire. Ehina is a whimsical spirit that lights the hearts of men like a deep burn and dances around their souls like wine. She is probably the latest god to be added to the pantheon; the earliest tales referring to her speak of the 'dancing girl of the fireplace', a ghost-spirit of Morudhain superstition, which was not elevated to the ranks of godhood until barely a couple of centuries ago. Even now, the church of Ehina is the less formal of the Morudhain pantheon and its priests the less serious, not only because their goddess was no more than a party spirit a few decades back but also because she requires her worshippers to be merry and celebrate. Ehina the Ember is doubtlessly the least powerful and influential of the Morudhain gods, yet she is also the one that keeps her followers happiest.

EHINA THE EMBER

Dancing Girl of the Fireplace, The Fire Spirit, The Flame

Lesser Goddess

Symbol: A flickering flame

Home Plane: The Abbannion

Alignment: Chaotic good

Portfolio: Dancing, fire, love, music, passion, revelry, sex

Worshippers: Carousers, dancers, lovers, merrymakers

Cleric Alignments: CG, CN, N, NG

Domains: Fire, Magic, Sun, Trickery

Favoured Weapon: 'Flamedancer' (longsword)

THE MORUDHAIN SETTING

Ehina looks as a woman of incredible beauty, with golden skin and eyes, fiery auburn hair, full red lips and freckled cheeks. She wears a wispy silk dress, six golden armlets and seven golden anklets that shake as she dances through the fire. When Ehina dances, her body emits a fiery halo and wisps of flame, until she herself seems to have turned into a frenzied dancing spark. She is always ready for love and merriment; she is always yearning to dance. She has been known to appear before mortals of exceptional beauty and dancing skills; she makes them ask her to dance and then she seduces them, teaches them or simply tries to have a good time together.

Dogma

Ehina represents the fiery passion with which the Morudhain give themselves to party and song, the pain of their burning desire and the drunken stupor that helps them forget their grim existence. She wants everybody to live and love as fully as she does; her followers should not allow any inhibition or depression to hamper their full and passionate enjoyment of life. She is also a patron of seduction and carnal love, so young people looking to attract or please a member of the opposite sex are well advised to commend themselves to Ehina.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of Ehina have no taboos or inhibitions, except those that interfere with happiness. Therefore, they are expected to engage constantly in ritual merriment and hedonistic practices; in the last century, it has become customary for clerics of Ehina to preside over all ceremonial festivities. A cleric of Ehina should wear loose, comfortable clothes and have at least some training in dancing and acrobatics. The fire goddess' temples are specially consecrated wooden or stone buildings, adorned with effigies of the goddess, delicate ornaments and symbols intended to incite passion in churchgoers. Great parties are held at these temples, which non-Morudhain priests would surely consider obscene.

GAMAGETH THE WOLF

The Morudhain beast-god has been a part of Morudhain folklore, if not of their pantheon, since the race began telling stories and giving names to the world. The ancient wolf-spirit of the primitive Morudhain is now known as Gamageth the wolf, a god of animals and the hunt. According to tradition,

Gamageth was the first mortal spirit in the world, as he was killed during an age when all creatures were immortal. Thus he became the Morudhain god of killing and hunting, a mantle he holds to this day.

GAMAGETH THE WOLF

The Beast-God, The First Death, The First Wolf, The Hunter

Demigod

Symbol: A wolf's head

Home Plane: The Abannion

Alignment: Neutral

Portfolio: Death, disease, hunger, hunting, killing or being killed, prey

Worshippers: Barbarians, druids, foragers, hunters, rangers, warriors

Cleric Alignments: N, CN, LN

Domains: Animal, Death, Destruction

Favoured Weapon: 'Hunter's Bow' (longbow)

Gamageth appears as a grizzled and diseased wolf, at least as big as a rhinoceros. His furry skin hangs in diseased strips from his body; his shaggy hair stands on end at some points and hangs carelessly at some others. His eyes are dull red; his teeth are sickly yellow. He is a terrifying beast and powerful enemy, capable of pursuing his chosen prey for all eternity, as his disease makes him immune to death or fatigue. He lives only for the hunt; he can help mortals dedicated to hunting or he can hunt them himself.

Dogma

Gamageth represents the death that shall come for everyone eventually. Only the immortal gods are safe from him, though it is written they shall lose their immortality one day and then they shall have to give themselves to Gamageth's hungry jaws. Followers of Gamageth are expected to deal death respectfully and carefully; he is greatly angered at purposeless deaths, such as the murder of innocents or sport hunting.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of Gamageth are mostly tribal shamans, expected to help their people with hunting rituals and animal handling. They dress in animal skins and often carry piercings or tattoos to indicate their faith. There are no shrines or temples to Gamageth, though certain meals and storage caves may be consecrated to him.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

THE OLD DRAGON

*There is a dragon god.
There is a dragon god!*

(Reported as Fiall Garnwynn's last words)

In the beginning, there were only the immortals. They created everything in the world from their own spilled blood and then gave eternal life to every creature. The world was paradise then, with no death, disease or hunger. Then the Old Dragon came, with claws that could rend the earth and jaws that contained death. The Old Dragon bit, poisoned and killed Gamageth the wolf, bringing death into the world and making Gamageth the First Dead. As soon as Death was created in the world, the immortals had to leave it, for they could not live in a place with death. The immortals left their children behind – mortal humans, also called Those-With-Death – to enjoy the gift the Old Dragon had given the world; thus it was that humans were born and gods exiled in a single act – the coming of death.

The Morudhain do not worship the Old Dragon, though they acknowledge its existence as a deity. They do revere the dragon as their god and father, though there has never been a formal church dedicated to it. It is not even officially forbidden; the Morudhain simply have no rites, clerics or temples for the Old Dragon – with the notable exception of the Dragon Stone clan.

Many analogies have been suggested between the Old Dragon of the Morudhain and the Dragon Lord, head of the late Athan pantheon. Both represent the gift of death and both are considered beyond the power of the gods. Even more, both were considered to live in the 'roots of the mountain', quite probably beneath Mount Moru itself. This seems to leave no doubt they are the same deity. However, I do disagree and here is the reason – where the Dragon Lord represented defying death and eternity, the Old Dragon is about accepting it. Where the Dragon Lord is an enemy of death, the Old Dragon is its lover. Where the Dragon Lord has a human aspect, the Old Dragon is a force of nature beyond all natural forces. Where the Dragon Lord embraces the darkness, the Old Dragon *is* the darkness. The Old Dragon is such a terrible god, such a terrible concept; I see why no sage, scholar or explorer has allowed himself to understand just what he represents.

THE OLD DRAGON

Father of Death, Father of Men, The Nameless Wyrn, The Worm

Intermediate Deity

Symbol: A westward spiral

Home Plane: The Abannion

Alignment: Neutral

Portfolio: Death, mortality, the unknown

Worshippers: No official worship outside the Dragon Stone clan

Cleric Alignments: N, NE

Domains: Death, Destruction, Knowledge

Favoured Weapon: None

The Old Dragon appears as a dark wyrn the size of a mountain, whose jaws and teeth carry plagues, poison and death. Its breath can kill time and eternity, its claws and tail dig in the very roots of the world. Nobody can see the Old Dragon, for even looking at it is dying from fright. Thus it went deep into the mountain, where it still lives alone, shunned and feared by the mortal men it created when it gave death to the world.

Dogma

The Old Dragon brought death to a world without time or decay, a world where nothing died. Upon creating death it created pain and destruction but it also created mortal men. This is what the Old Dragon represents – life is a product of death. Those without death are the gods; the Old Dragon is the great mystery behind it all. The Old Dragon has no followers, for it is not possible to follow what the Old Dragon is.

Clergy and Temples

There is no official church of the Old Dragon. A cleric character may take the Old Dragon as its deity and choose his domains from the Old Dragon's list; however, he shall receive no support from any church, for not even the Dragon Stone clan has true clerics dedicated to it. Furthermore, he must be able to understand the ethos of the Old Dragon, which nobody will explain to him as nobody has studied it. Clerics of the Old Dragon are, as everyone else in the world, alone in the darkness.

Nonhuman Gods

Fiall Garnwynn wrote precious little about the gods of the local nonhuman folk. Below are the few facts the Royal Researchers managed to gather on

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

the subject, obtained from several sources including Garnwynn's own sparse notes (*Note from the Researchers*).

I asked: 'Do spirits worship spirits?'
He answered: 'Do men worship men?'

—From the stage play *The Tragedy of Alcano*

DROW GODS

If there are dark elves below Mount Moru, they must have arrived at some point after the Morudhain legends, as local folktales make no mention of their existence. Anyway, let us leave aside the fact it is not possible and assume that, as you say, the drow do live below the mountain. In that case, they would surely worship their Dark Mother, the Spider-Goddess; a terrible deity. Pure evil, a real demon if there ever was one. In fact, it makes me shiver just thinking about her and her dark cult... my word; you do not think there actually is a cult to the Dark Mother below Mount Moru, do you?

—Malcius the Sage (interviewed about the religion of dark elves)



Drow Gods in Mount Moru

The Unh Anhegr clan of dark elves, established in the caves deep below Mount Moru, worship a version of the Dark Mother they call the Spider-Goddess. Despite the different name, the Spider-Goddess is exactly the same as the Dark Mother in all respects, including alignment, domains, dogma, appearance and everything else. The Kanahraun barbarians, on the contrary, worship the demon Azzanoth the Glutton.

THE DARK MOTHER

The Dark Mother is the only god of the drow that is well known on the surface world. Even among other Underdeep races, many gods and goddesses of the drow are virtually unknown, leading races throughout the world to some incorrect assumptions about the dark elves. Particularly on the surface, the drow are regarded as a single, monolithic culture, a connection of closely related cities populated in equal part by dark elves and giant spiders, ruled over with an iron fist by a cruel order of priestesses.

The Dark Mother, though a feminine deity is focused on the darker aspects of motherhood, such as vengeful protectiveness, control and obscene fecundity. She considers all the drow her children, a viewpoint that frequently puts her at odds with the other gods of the drow pantheon. She is fiercely protective of her children, but through her priestesses is equally fierce about destroying any children who cross her. There are always other worshippers, other children, other slaves.

In her role as a nurturer, the Dark Mother showers her priestesses with gifts, purchasing their loyalty through the bestowment of divine powers. In turn, she demands complete and absolute loyalty and service. The price paid by a priestess who betrays the faith is terrible enough to make even the drow shudder.

Men never serve as clergy for the Dark Mother, as she sees the masculine as weak and revolting, useful for one purpose only. That one purpose is the only contact the priestesses have with males (outside of their official duties, of course), when the priestesses take a male as a consort. This is done for breeding purposes only; no priestess of the Dark Mother is allowed to actually marry.

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THE DARK MOTHER

Greater Deity

Symbol: A black spider on a silver web.

Home Plane: Unknown

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Portfolio: Death, destruction, drow, fate

Worshippers: Assassins, drow, warriors, wizards

Cleric Alignment: CE, NE, LE

Domains: Darkness, Death, Evil, Fear

Favoured Weapons: Flails, throwing disks, whips

Dogma

The Dark Mother revels in the sacrifices offered her by her priestesses and all her temples keep several giant spiders for use in preparing those sacrifices for the altar. The ritual of sacrifice itself is a terrifying thing and the temples of the Dark Mother often ring with the agonised screams of the horrified victims.

A properly prepared sacrifice is first bound with spider thread, contorted and twisted into the proper form preferred by the Dark Mother and then is hung upside-down over the sacrificial altar. At the end of the process of preparation, only the victim's pain-racked face is exposed.

Each day, the priestesses pierce the sacrifice's body with long, sharpened needles. The absorbent spider silk slowly draws the blood from the wounds, staining the silk a vivid scarlet. When all the white in a sacrificial cocoon has been turned red, the victim is ready for the ultimate sacrifice. A paralytic, degenerative poison is injected into the target and, as its body turns to a soft, gooey mass of disrupted flesh and rubbery bone, the priests and acolytes of the Dark Mother consume the victim. The bones, while still malleable from the poison, are then shaped and formed into objects pleasing to the Dark Mother and used to adorn the temple.

Clergy and Temples

Priestesses of the Dark Mother almost never emerge from their temples, save when they are issuing new laws or proclamations in the cities they control. On rare occasions, one of these dark-hearted drow females might be dispatched on special mission for the goddess, which is when they are normally encountered by adventurers. Tasked with retrieving magical items or dispatching enemies of the drow, these priestesses are dangerous and driven foes to be avoided at all costs. Because they have the authority of their goddess, the priestesses are often

accompanied by the most elite of the temple's wizards and warriors, giving them a powerful bodyguard should they be threatened or need to threaten others.

AZZANOTH

Azzanoth the Glutton is not a part of the drow pantheon at all. He is a demon lord from the infernal planes, whose attention was attracted by the Lost Tribe of the Kanahraun.

Entwining himself among the Kanahraun after rescuing them from a slow but certain death, Azzanoth has made this band of dark elves a hobby of his. The prices he exacted for his aid, prices about which the Kanahraun foolishly did not inquire before accepting help, have turned the tribe into a subrace of feral drow, dangerous and depraved.

Azzanoth no longer lives among the Kanahraun. Indeed, that period was relatively brief and has been over for millennia, but the influence of that time is still felt, from the fiendish traits he passed on to the offspring he fathered upon the drow to the cannibalistic rituals with which the feral drow revere their demon lord.

AZZANOTH

The Glutton

Intermediate Deity

Symbol: A fang-filled mouth, usually scratched out in blood.

Home Plane: Plane of Fire

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Portfolio: Feral Drow, cruelty, gluttony, necromancy

Worshippers: Kanahraun drow

Cleric Alignment: CE

Domains: Chaos, Death, Evil

Favoured Weapons: Scimitar, shortspear, shortbow

Dogma

The Kanahraun worship the Glutton with a variety of rites which no outsider has ever seen and survived. Most of the rituals involve literally slaughtering and eating a victim alive, gifting the flesh to Azzanoth but at the same time taking sustenance from it, in deference to the Glutton's First Price. The least debased of the rituals are concerned with scarring and disfiguring one's own body in praise to Azzanoth, the most debased involve consuming the flesh of the undead.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

Clergy and Temples

There are few permanent temples to Azzanoth, as the Kanahraun are a nomadic people, prowling the Underdeep and hunting for food. Those temples which do exist are made almost entirely of bones taken from the feral drow's victims and melded together as part of a process taught the Kanahraun by Azzanoth known as boneforging. The temples are constantly being added to and augmented, growing ever outward and upward with no thought given to form, creating a meaningless shape of chaos that Azzanoth finds more pleasing than any planned structure. The inside is built of a combination of stone and more bone, containing rooms of all sizes and dimensions.

To be a priest or priestess of Azzanoth, one must literally be born to it. The Glutton only accepts those Kanahraun descended from his fiendish offspring as his priests.

DIBBRABAN

The deep gnomes of the secret city of Ogginnogg worship Dibbraban, a god of crafts. Very little is known about this god, as the reclusive gnomes do not talk much about their customs or religion, limiting themselves to trade with the Morudhain and Stonehold dwarves. Dibbraban seems to be Ogginnogg's patron deity but not the main god of the deep gnomes; in fact, he seems to be part of a rather big pantheon, which shares many deities of rock gnomes.

DIBBRABAN

The Crafty One

Intermediate Deity

Symbol: A gold bracelet

Home Plane: The underworkshop

Alignment: Neutral

Portfolio: Craftsmanship, hard work, perseverance, success through skill, wit

Worshippers: Deep gnome artisans, merchants, politicians and tricksters

Cleric Alignments: N, NG

Domains: Earth, Knowledge, Luck, Protection, Trickery

Favoured Weapon: 'Vilvi Divli' (gnome hooked hammer)

Dibbraban appears as a lean and muscular grey-skinned gnome, with bright cheerful eyes and a perpetual half-smile. He dresses in plain, practical

adventurer's clothes and wears simple jewellery. A gnome hooked hammer usually hangs at his belt's right side; this is 'Vilvi Divli', the 'supreme utensil', able to replace almost any tool in the world – and do the job better. Dibbraban is always looking for something to do; once he finds a suitable task, he puts all of his wits and resources to it, including his priceless Vilvi Divli. When Dibbraban sets to a task, few things can lead him away until he succeeds – and he usually does.

Dogma

The dogma of Dibbraban can be summed up in two phrases: work hard and be smart. In an environment as hostile as the underground realm, a gnome needs to work to ensure his own survival. If the world is tough, he needs to be smarter and tougher than the world – that is the credo of Dibbraban and the expected way of life for all his followers. The god has a special preference for gnomes faced with daunting tasks or unbeatable obstacles; he maintains that no enemy or quandary is too tough for a clever gnome to surmount.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of Dibbraban live as members of their communities, helping other gnomes with those rituals related to work and war, such as blessing the farmers before harvest season or the defenders of a city before an invasion. However, Dibbraban expects his clerics to actually help out with tasks rather than simply giving his blessings, so it is a common occurrence for clerics of Dibbraban to be among the aforementioned farmers or at the front lines among the aforementioned defenders. Clerics of Dibbraban are expected to solve their tasks using their wits, beating their foes by outsmarting them. They dress in loose, practical clothes, just like their god; they are often seen carrying gnome hooked hammers. Temples to Dibbraban are true workshops, where several followers of the god are constantly working on practical stuff for the community such as furniture, bricks and healing tools.

TOIL AND TORTURE

They are dark dwarves, they are... crazy... hateful eyes; dark beards... they call themselves the Dweg... two races, united to kill... to conquer... to...

–Survivor's testimony (recorded at a massacre site near deep gnome territory)

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

During the few weeks before this publication was finished, researchers received several accounts regarding a new army somewhere deep below Mount Moru – an army consisting of two underground dwarf-like races, the derro and duergar, brought together to form what is known as the Dweg army. Nothing is known about their terrible, twin deities, except they are a dual version of the old duergar and derro gods.

TOIL AND TORTURE

Gods of the Dweg, The Twin Gods

Intermediate Deities

Symbol: A bloody knife crossed with a sledgehammer

Home Plane: The Eternal Mines

Alignment: Neutral evil

Portfolio: The Dweg, exhaustion, pain, unity

Worshippers: Derro and duergar of the Dweg army

Cleric Alignments: NE, CE, LE

Domains: Evil, Knowledge, Magic, Strength

Favoured Weapon: ‘Blade of Pain’ (dagger), ‘Maul of Fatigue’ (warhammer)

The twin deities Toil and Torture look as larger, darker and more sinister members of the duergar and derro races, respectively. They are dressed in black robes with hooded cloaks. Toil carries a great sledgehammer called the Maul of Fatigue, whose wielder can keep on working beyond exhaustion and even beyond death; Torture carries a blood-soaked, vicious looking dagger called the blade of pain; any living creature touched by the blade suffers endless, unimaginable agony. Toil and Torture left their respective pantheons to rule the Dweg race together, making derro and duergar join forces to conquer the underworld.

Dogma

Toil and Torture hold that death, exhaustion and pain are the ultimate truths in the universe; they expect their followers to live by this law, ready to work themselves into the grave, enduring and causing as much pain as possible before dying. It was by this law that the Dweg tribe was formed and remained together.

Clergy and Temples

Clerics of Toil and Torture are divided; those devoted to Toil are heavily armoured unholy warriors, leading their brethren in their crusade to take over the world. Clerics devoted to Torture, on the contrary, are cruel and insane tormentors, who delight in sacrifice and misery. Both clerical orders wear black robes, though Toil worshippers wear much heavier armour than those faithful to Torture. Also, both orders are known for training in other professions besides priesthood; most of Toil’s clerics are also fighters, while most of Torture’s clerics are also sorcerers.

OTHER NONHUMAN GODS

Several nonhuman races exist in Mount Moru, about which humans know very little. The following is a study on their deities, taken directly from the researchers’ own notes.

The Goblin God

Very little is known about the goblins of Mount Moru, much less about their dark deity, which we have been forced to call ‘The Goblin God’ for lack of a more accurate name. We know the Goblin God is not one of the best-known goblin warrior deities; instead, it seems to be a demonic cult of some sort. Beyond that, the Goblin God’s identity, dogma and system of worship are a complete mystery.

The Hammerfather

The Mount Moru dwarves, particularly those located at Stonehold, worship their own god of the forge, which humans call the Hammerfather, or the Soul Forger. We have no details about the Hammerfather’s worship or appearance, mostly because the dwarves are extremely secretive about their own customs, much more even than the intolerant Morudhain themselves.

Surtur

Some sages and scouts have reported the presence of fire giants at the base of Mount Moru; if this were the truth, they would surely worship their fearsome fire god, Surtur. Fire giants believe Surtur is destined to take over the world, destroying it in a huge cataclysm and bringing his children back to rule over the fiery remains.

MOUNT MORU

I fear it. I fear the place. I fear myself and everything in me that has to do with that damned mountain. That is why I have to go, do you understand me? I know you do. I have to go.

—Excerpt from a letter from Fiall Garnwynn to Lady Earie Essaen (date undisclosed by request).

MOUNT MORU

An Essay by Aurelia Altasofia Bacchi (excerpt)

Mount Moru is a craggy peak of whitish grey rock in the middle of the bleak country known as the Morudhain lands, the word ‘Morudhain’ meaning ‘from the fearsome place’ in the local language. Doubtlessly the fearsome place folklore and legend refer to is Mount Moru itself, also given the names ‘Ashen Peak’ and ‘Dragon Tooth’ by natives and visitors. It is universally agreed that Mount Moru is a place of terror and danger, though the nature of such danger is not clear to most people – it tends to be more a matter of instinct, of people avoiding the mountain without apparent reason, like knowing

something is amiss but not exactly what. It is not only because of Mount Moru’s threatening looks; it is something else – something that inhabits the base of the spine of every creature that has lived under the mountain’s shadow long enough. One would have to agree of course that the general appearance of Mount Moru would be reason enough to mistrust the place; deep gorges, craggy slopes, narrow ravines where a loose step could doom the best explorer to a slow and painful death at the bottom of a lost chasm in the middle of the badlands. Oh, and the howling of the wind of course; that maddening shriek through the thin, tall peaks, which always gives the impression that the place is haunted. I should stop here and explain that when I say ‘haunted’, I do not mean the place is inhabited by ghosts, though it doubtlessly must be; rather, Mount Moru’s howling winds and its whitish shroud give the impression the peak itself is a kind of wraith or mummy; desiccated, dead, yet full of hate and dark power. It is not Mount Moru that is haunted, it is the whole region – and Mount Moru is the ghost haunting it.



An Overview of Mount Moru

Mount Moru is about 3,600 feet high with a circumference of roughly 6,000 feet at the base. It is a single peak in a barren hill landscape, which everyone calls the Morudhain Lands. The geography, flora and fauna of the Morudhain Lands have never been fully studied; Mount Moru itself, of course, is even more of a mystery, with its unexplored grottos and unplumbed depths. Historians seem to agree Mount Moru was the cradle of the ancient Athan civilisation, which means there must be a wealth of lost archaeological sites

MOUNT MORU

somewhere inside its labyrinth of inner grottoes; it is also a well known fact wild, horrible creatures of all kinds can be found all over its slopes and passages, as evidenced by terrifying reports from locals and visitors alike. Local folk also have a legend holding that dragons gather at Mount Moru's summit at certain dates, which makes sense even if it is only a rumour, given the notorious degree of dragon worship in local folklore.

(Scribbled to one side in the original copy): *Dragon stories? Dragon worship? What a strange appeal! Why? Do not know – Did not see any dragons – Why do I care indeed? Must remember to research further...*

The Surrounding Country

The lands surrounding Mount Moru are much more varied and rich than suggested by earlier treatises on the subject, whose authors were obviously not really interested in writing about a wasteland – or maybe they were scared of it all. Either way, most existing works about Mount Moru are depressingly lacking in depth and understanding regarding its surrounding lands. I shall go into detail in further paragraphs; for now, suffice it to say the Morudhain lands include several tribes of a grim, yet very interesting folk, which unsurprisingly call themselves the Morudhain; they shall merit a full chapter later on. However – and here is just one of the many mistakes made by other explorers of the area – theirs are not the only settlements in the region; I have personally visited and studied a dwarven fortress, whose name could loosely be translated as 'Stonehold'. Much closer to civilised realms – both in space and in culture – there is the bordering settlement of Meadowvale, a typical rustic village made uncommon by its close contact with Morudhain barbarians and their grim environment. The Meadowvale area includes a shrine to the Unicorn God Iri, aptly called 'the Last Shrine' among the local fishermen and farmers. Meadowvale and the Last Shrine are the starting point for Moru Road, an old road built by the ancient Athans millennia ago, which has long since become neglected and forgotten but is still the only straight path into Mount Moru. There are also the many colourful and noteworthy landmarks around the mountain area, such as the Haunted Lake – which shall also be covered in future chapters.



Inside Mount Moru

Despite the notoriety of its dark profile and arid surroundings, the most famous feature of Mount Moru is its contents – a mysterious, never fully explored compound of caves and tunnels, known precisely for how unknown it is. To date, we know no more than a fraction of what truly lies inside the mount, although popular fancy has created a mythical underground realm of beasts, spirits and ancient ruins. Based on my own scant, superficial explorations of the area, I have come to organise the contents of Mount Moru as follows:

The Upper Areas

These comprise mostly small grottos and old civilised sites, such as mines or lesser underground outposts. The best-known remnants of the Athan civilisation can be found here.

The Deeper Areas

This would be the core of the mountain, starting some 1,500 to 2,000 feet beneath the summit; it comprises mostly natural unexplored caves, purportedly full of all sorts of demons and monsters, according to local accounts that range from the spine chilling to the nonsensical. If there are any Athan ruins in these areas, there must be sparse and not too deep.

MOUNT MORU

The Underground

The area below the base of Mount Moru is completely unknown, except for the barely-reported presence of strange gnome-creatures that occasionally come up to trade with surface men.

The Lost City

It is rumoured the lost city of Archaneroth, the legendary capitol of the Athan Civilisation, treasure and torment of many an archaeologist, is located somewhere inside Mount Moru; there is nothing to prove the rumour is anything but baseless fancy, though legends abound about the golden spires of Archaneroth and how its inhabitants still live there somewhere, exactly as they have lived for thousands of years, immortal and untouched by the concerns of the world.

Delving Into Mount Moru

The following are excerpts of notes based on Fiall Garnwynn's actual, first-hand exploration of Mount Moru, during which he personally visited many of the areas described herein. Additional material has been compiled from notes by other explorers, as well as a few accounts taken directly from the local folk (Note by the Researchers).

There I go again, though I already regret my first visit so much I would rather the gods had smitten me instead of allowing it. I should have never become attracted to this damned place, should have never come here... and yet I have no doubt it was my destiny all along. I do belong to Mount Moru; I am as much a part of it as the monsters and legends. I can never turn back...

—Fiall Garnwynn, *A Goodbye*

MORU ROAD

Moru Road starts a few hundred feet northeast of the Meadowvale village and then it winds northward a little more than 100 miles until arriving to the base of Mount Moru. In all, following the road from Meadowvale to Mount Moru takes roughly one week on foot. To the north, Moru Road ends in the Lost Pass at the southern face of the mountain; this pass used to be a pathway right through the base of Mount Moru, from which Moru Road continued on northward. However, the pass was blocked by rubble a few centuries ago, now, the official end of

Moru Road is the Lost Pass; the only way to continue northward without going around Mount Moru is to take the Moru Path up into the mountain.

THE MORU PATH

There is a mountain trail leading off the point where Moru Road dies at the Lost Pass junction. This trail meanders up into the mountain for about a day's walk until it reaches the first tunnels into the Upper Areas inside Mount Moru, a little more than a mile above ground level. This ascending trail, known as the Moru Path, is the main access way inside Mount Moru; nearly all of the explorers and travellers that come to Mount Moru use the Moru Path to get in. The Moru Path ends officially at the entrance of the tunnels into the Upper Areas; after that, the long trip inside Mount Moru begins...

THE HAUNTED LAKE

The third and most unusual entrance into Mount Moru is the Haunted Lake, which I have discussed earlier in these notes. By following the course of the spring and waterfalls that feed the haunted loch at the mountain base, it is possible to find a trail leading 3,000 feet up into the mouth of a cave. This cave leads inside some abandoned mines, probably made by dwarves or by some unfortunate Morudhain settlers. There must be at least a few paths leading from these mines inside Mount Moru, though I cannot swear thus since I have



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not finished exploring the mines myself. Should the gods grant me the courage to travel to that damn mountain again, I shall try and finish my exploration some day...

BENEATH MOUNT MORU

(Note from the Researchers): The following notes about 'inner' Mount Moru are taken from extremely varied and unreliable sources, from Fiall Garnwynn's occasional drinking 'adventurer' companions, to superstitious Morudhain savages that could produce no proof of their testimonies. Furthermore, the notes have been gathered from wildly different periods and stages of Garnwynn's own research, which accounts for their disparity and flawed arrangement. A much more clear, comprehensive and trustworthy account of inner Mount Moru can be found in the most excellent treatise entitled The Path of Archaneroth.

THE HIGH FORTRESS

The reason we are gathered here, then, is to report the successful expedition into the first underground level of Mount Moru, undertaken by the Royal Brigade and my person (...) after we cleared the last of the tunnels, we discovered a complete underground fortress, of such size and complexity it could easily have been called a palace or citadel. We deemed it was of Athaeian design, for the architecture was much reminiscent of the other Athaeian cities we have seen and it was located in the entrance to the Athaeian territory (...) thus we have named it the High Fortress, as it is located high and close to the surface and its builders surely used it for elevated purposes. We proceeded to obtain whatever treasures we could deem as being of value and worthy of the treasure halls of Her Majesty, while myself and other sages made the following transcript, being a precise copy of the markings we found on the walls and its meaning in the Athaeian tongue (...)

—Account of the discovery of the High Fortress by the Royal Expedition Brigade (excerpt)

There be somethin' like a castle a few hundrid feet after th' Moru Path entrance... it look like a cave but it be no cave proper cuz below the rock are old walls, like they was built and not natural, if ye get me meanin' sir... a mine? Mmmm, no, I did not find no mine, guv'nor...

—Archus Brainnan, prospector

Yes, they entered the caves last moon. I saw it. Shadow demons or goblins they were, moving like they were bound for the tunnels inside... how many? Enough to take over the cursed fortress, that is for sure. The goblins are moving for war, they are...

—Maevai Narrough, Morudhain shepherd

DWARVEN MINES

Not only am I sure there is a gold mine beyond the Haunted Lake entrance into Mount Moru; I am also certain the dwarves at Stonehold have settled in Mount Moru for the very purpose of taking it back. Why they have not moved into it, I cannot tell, as I cannot be moved to take the gold myself. After learning what I learned there, no amount of gold shall be worth a lifetime of damnation. Perhaps the dwarves are waiting for someone or something to make Mount Moru healthy again. If that is the case, they shall rot in their stone halls for their mine shall be forever surrounded by Hell...

—Fiall Garnwynn, Paths Into the Rock

THE FIRE PITS

Though no living explorer has actually gone beyond the deep mines below the Athan Fortress, it stands to reason that there should be volcanic caves, even lava pits, somewhere deeper into Mount Moru. As we all know, all mountains are extensions of the fiery environment below the earth; I cannot see why Mount Moru should be an exception. Surely these fire caves are not the infernal realm of Morudhain superstition — surely they are warm tunnels connected to lava pits, nothing more.

—From the Studies on Mount Moru by Andwar Bacchi

Below the mines there is nothing. Nothing but Hell itself, with its fire pits and its demons. I shall go beyond that, though, for that is my doom.

—Fiall Garnwynn, A Goodbye

THE GIANT CAVES

There are too many testimonies referring to the existence of giants in the Mount Moru for us to cast aside. Going no further than local accounts, we can identify no less than three different giant species, sharing space inside the mountain. Some reports place them high in the mountain paths, while some

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others hold they have an underground realm just below the mountain base. Probably both are true – there is enough space in Mount Moru, that is for sure.

–From Cynnar Darran’s *Giants of the World*

According to the Morudhain and the dark-skinned gnomish creatures that they sometimes trade with, there is a fantastic realm, inhabited solely by giants, located somewhere underground, near the base of Mount Moru. Sadly, the tunnels into the mountain base remain blocked and trying to descend into the inner mount from the upper accesses has proven a dangerous and difficult enterprise; therefore we have no way to prove or deny these stories. Until a brave and resourceful adventurer manages to reach the long-abandoned depths of the inner mountain base and explore them thoroughly, we shall never know whether there really are ‘giant caves’ below Mount Moru or not.

–From the *Studies on Mount Moru* by Andwar Bacchi

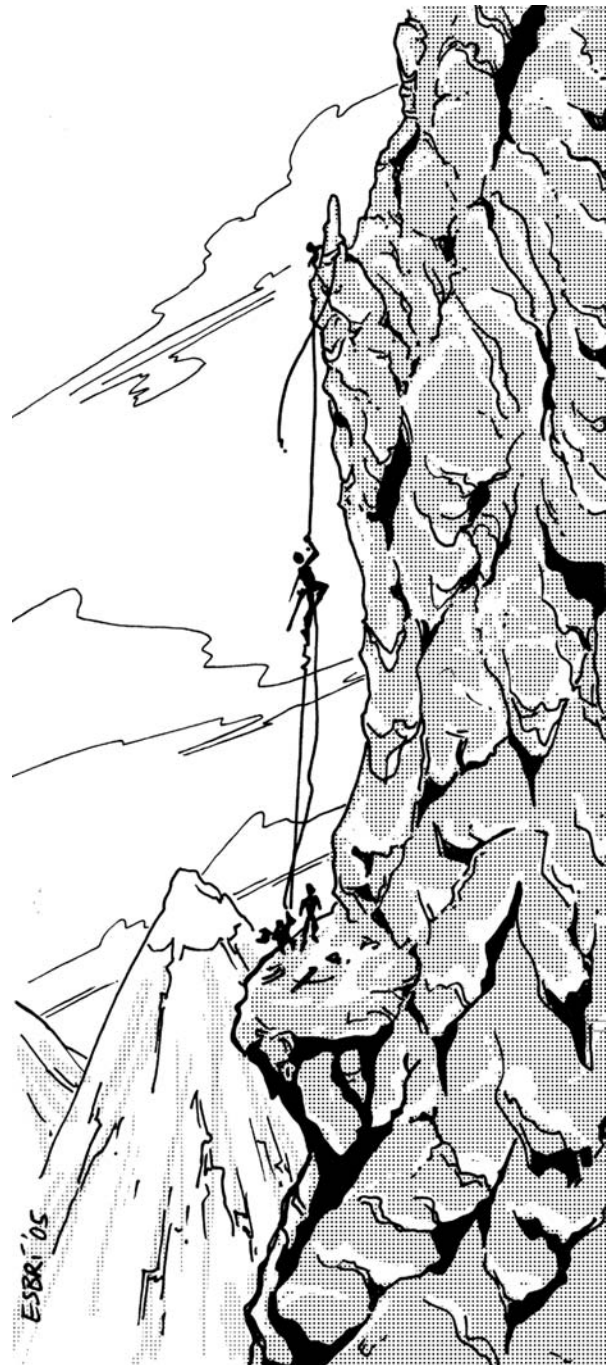
UNDERGROUND REALMS

There should be no doubt about the existence of a full-scale underground environment, with its tunnels, creatures and perhaps even cities, below Mount Moru. Not only because of the several relations and legends referring to such a world but also because it makes sense that such a vast cave complex as Mount Moru should extend far below. So far the only thing we know for sure is the presence of an underground city inhabited by gnome-like beings, which call themselves *sveir fay blin* as far as this writer knows. However, these *sveir fay blin* brought many other stories along with them, such as the rumour of dark dwarf-like races bent on conquest, living in great fortress deep below the earth, evil dragons lurking in pitch-black caves or even dark elves, which would have nothing to do in these parts of the world but perhaps could have reached Mount Moru from unknown underground tunnels. These stories are all as yet unsubstantiated, yet they do cast a kind of spell on the listener – the unknowable, indefinable feel that only true stories have, no matter how fantastic or terrifying they may be.

THE LIGHTLESS DEPTHS

What is below the depths? What is below the deepest realms of Mount Moru? Even darker caves, even deeper tunnels, ever darker and deeper until

there is nowhere to go but Hell? Dark underground realms, ruled by races forgotten by mortal men? Or perhaps the lost Athan cities; cursed by the gods and buried forever under unfathomable tons of rock... is Archaneroth there, somewhere below the deepest depths? Are dragons there? Is the Old Dragon himself there, as stated by Morudhain legends? I do not think we shall ever know, unless a man actually goes in there and finds out for himself.



DENIZENS OF THE LAND

People of the Morudhain Lands

The following intends to be a comprehensive account of the people inhabiting Moru Country, their uses and customs. It is mainly taken from notes by Fiall Garnwynn, with some excerpts from related texts by different authors.

The Morudhain

Surely the most important reason not to explore Mount Moru is the presence of the grim and intolerant Morudhain tribes scattered around the area. Morudhain culture is a fascinating mystery in itself; however, they are extremely secretive about their customs and lands, to the point they have even been known to drive out civilised explorers from the area. Therefore, an expedition to the Moru lands should account not only for the dangers of its unknown terrain but also for the Morudhain's hostility and caginess.

—From *Sir Damhain's Travel Guide for the Adventurous Sort*

They were stout, red-haired people, with stares like stone knives – dull, hard and painful...

—Anonymous

We do not like strangers.

—Uemha (four years old)

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MORUDHAIN

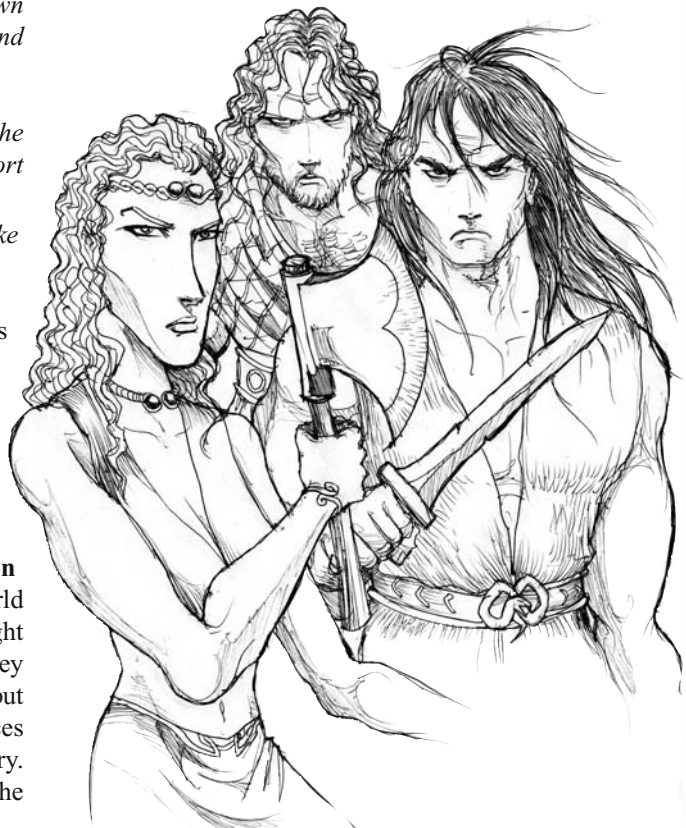
By Fiall Garnwynn

They came to live in the sternest place in the world – but they were sterner. They deal, trade and fight without words, always quiet as a faraway storm; they talk only to tell stories. Their tools are crude but their minds are sharp. They have no armed forces yet they have repelled all invasions on their territory. They never smile; their life is cheerless except by the

fireside, singing melancholic songs about themselves. They are the Morudhain, Those Living beside Terror; those that wake and sleep by the shadow of Mount Moru and live with it every day. These are the Morudhain. These are my brethren.

CULTURE

The Morudhain race arrived in the bleak territory that would be given their name thousands of years ago, nothing but primitive sub-men at the time; dressed in hides, wielding wooden clubs and stone tools. For years, they struggled to survive in one of the harshest, most inhospitable environments known to man, until they managed to settle – if not thrive – in this grim world. It took them many centuries to evolve into the strong, proud yet sombre race they are now. During these last millennia, the Morudhain have developed a spiritual bond with their land, gradually becoming a reflection of it – bare, yet full of secrets; harsh, yet quiet; grim, yet serene.



DENIZENS OF THE LAND

Rougher than Hell

To survive in the cruel, barren region they have lived in for the last five millennia, the Morudhain have developed a very stern racial personality. It would not be exaggerating to affirm the Morudhain do not laugh – they do *not*. Even in their moments of greater merriment, their eyes may widen and their countenances soften somewhat, yet they virtually never go beyond a discreet smile. Conversely, they are never afraid to show their other emotions, which results in constant displays of melancholy or anger, often startling to civilised folk. Even the brave warriors of a tribe are allowed to cry in public without losing face. The rough manners of the Morudhain are also bereft of any kind of diplomatic consideration – since they have no concept of social etiquette and quite often speak the truth about everything, civilised folk can find them quite inconsiderate, even offensive, in social occasions. Even more, Morudhain have no qualms about publicly performing activities other cultures would deem crass or unseemly; for example defecating or even mating in public, both of which are somewhat common practices among the Morudhain.

The Secret People

It is sad we know so little about the Morudhain and their culture, though there can be no denying it is largely their fault. They have never been kind to strangers, remaining fiercely independent even when trading or dealing with other races; all the more reason, then, to remain reticent when it is about their own uses and customs. Even I, who have discovered my own Morudhain blood, who have been given the honour of being called ‘friend’ by a Morudhain chief, cannot begin to explain what the Morudhain truly are, what their culture is truly like. Even the little I have come to understand in these months escapes translation to mere words – to understand the Morudhain, it is necessary to feel what they are, to become what they are – and most men would sooner understand or become a stone or a worm than a Morudhain, although they appear to be of the same race.

Adventurers

Morudhain rarely become adventurers; after thousands upon thousands of years having to fight daily just to avoid dying, the concept of seeking danger or thrills for their own sake has become largely unfamiliar to Morudhain culture. Even so, exceptions do exist and every now and again a Morudhain youth is born with an unquenchable wanderlust or thirst for glory. These individuals often become barbarous warriors, mercenary soldiers or woodsmen, using their racial

skills to make their way in the civilised world. There are also some Morudhain, usually those with a spiritual bent, that undertake long pilgrimages in a quest of spiritual enlightenment ordained by their gods.

Language

The Morudhain tongue is rich, deep and complex; however, it lacks a written form, which the Morudhain compensate for by communicating via crude pictograms and runic symbols. Some sages and explorers have developed a written form for the Morudhain tongue, though it becomes confusing and defective when attempting to adapt certain subtleties of the original pronunciation.

Daily Life

As could be expected, the daily life of the Morudhain people is as dreary and grim as they are themselves. Most of their time is spent hunting and foraging for the meagre food they can get out of the Moru Country; they only rest during their ritual festivities.

Social Roles

All are equal in Morudhain society; men, women, elder citizens and children share all building, fighting, hunting and foraging tasks, without any distinction. The Morudhain young receive full adult responsibility as soon as they learn to talk; sick or frail members of the tribe are expected to work almost as much as healthy ones. As a result, social strata and even leadership are very loose in Morudhain communities, with command falling upon the tribe member that has the clearest purpose at the moment. The only exception to this dreadfully egalitarian society is the priest caste – Morudhain druids and shamans *are* considered apart from their brethren and given additional responsibilities and authority for their ritual knowledge. However, not even this excuses them from doing community work with everybody else when needed.

Mysticism

The religion and beliefs of the Morudhain are still largely unknown by civilised folk. They do have a divine pantheon and a series of druidic rituals dedicated to it. Morudhain ceremonies are mostly related to the seasons and natural forces or to community events such as coming of age, marriage and death rites. It bears noting that what passes for a written language among the Morudhain, their pictographic system, has an entirely mystic origin and purpose, seen in fact as a form of magic by all Morudhain, both priests and laymen.

DENIZENS OF THE LAND

Trade

Morudhain people regularly trade with the civilised folk on their borders, especially with the relatively wealthy citizens of Meadowvale. The Morudhain provide hides, tools and jewellery in exchange for food, clothes and building materials, mostly wood. Historically, this kind of trade has been the only constant contact between the Morudhain and other races throughout the millennia.

The Rule

Morudhain tribes are led by chiefs, though the title is a loose mantle at best. Many tribes make a larger tribe or clan, the chiefs of these clans, rulers of several villages, are the strongest leaders among the Morudhain, yet even they would have trouble enforcing any kind of true authority beyond their own close family. Other than this, the Morudhain do not see themselves as a nation, so they have no single ruler. The mightiest Morudhain chieftain is doubtlessly Craomach Dannann, the leader of the Silver Mirror Tribe; however, the other clan chiefs do not pay him any fealty or recognise his supremacy in any way.

Note by the researchers: At the time of this writing, the Craomach Dannann Fiall Garnwynn refers to has died many decades ago, replaced by his son who was killed in turn during a goblin raid. Currently there is no Morudhain leader with the strength attributed to the historical figure of Craomach Dannann.

THE TRIBES

It has always been a striking characteristic of the Morudhain outlook that each of their clans or tribes sees itself as a separate nation, independent from – and often the enemy of – most other Morudhain tribes. In fact, Morudhain clans always refer to each other as foreigners, an attitude they reinforce with periodical inter-tribal wars.

It has been proven that the average Morudhain will feel significantly aggravated, even prone to violent deeds, if his relation with Morudhain of another tribe should be implied.

–From Salego of Tomaria's *Morudhain Lore*

The following should be an adequate account of the different tribes the Morudhain group themselves into. Each of these tribes is fiercely separate from the remainder of the Morudhain race; visitors are well advised to always refer to members of each tribe as a separate country.

The Bloodoak Tribe

Members of the Bloodoak tribe always wear red-green body paint, even in their daily life, to signify their symbolic blood relation to the ancient oak. The Bloodoaks are among the most traditionalist and narrow-minded of all Morudhain; they retain all of their ancient customs, including many archaic tribal rites that are distressing even to other Morudhain. For this same reason, Bloodoaks have literally never allowed outsiders into their culture and remain the most reclusive and intolerant tribe of a very reclusive and intolerant race.

The lands of the Bloodoak tribe are located at the centre of the Moru Country, no more than a couple of miles east of Mount Moru itself. They rarely deal with their neighbours, the Stonehold dwarves, despite being the tribe living closest to them. In fact, they rarely trade even with other Morudhain.

The Dead Mist Tribe

The Dead Mist Tribe is also called the 'Wandering Tribe' since it lost its lands during the tribal wars a century ago. Unable to claim a new country for their own, the Dead Mists have established a reputation for being the toughest, hardiest and most persistent of Morudhain tribes as they manage to survive as aimless wanderers in the deadlands. On the other hand, their lack of ties to a single territory has made the Dead Mist the most broad-based of all Morudhain tribes, unafraid to trade, interact or even be friends with other tribes, sometimes even with non-Morudhain folk. Even so, the Dead Mist tribe has a strong sense of clan, so as to survive and keep together at heart even if their people are scattered to the four winds. Thus, a Dead Mist Morudhain will talk and trade with anyone but will open his soul to nobody outside his clan.

The Griffon Tribe

People of the Griffon Tribe are leaner and fairer than other Morudhain, their gazes hard and full of violence; Griffons are in fact the most warlike among the Morudhain. This does not mean they march around challenging or conquering other tribes, though it does mean rising in arms against them is always a bad idea. The Griffon Tribe's strength and bravery are unmatched among the Morudhain – although members of other tribes will gladly prove their own strength on anyone that says that aloud – and their racial pride is such that they will not even breed with other Morudhain.

DENIZENS OF THE LAND

The lands of the Griffon Tribe are far towards the western Moru border, near the northwest riverbanks. They have defended this land against countless invasions from neighbouring realms and held their ground for many centuries.

The Moss Rock Tribe

Members of the Moss Rock tribe are mostly regarded as spiritual, deep and mysterious folk. They are the lore keepers and mystics, so to speak, of the Morudhain race. They owe the name of their tribe to their territory – a rocky, bare expanse where, for some reason, rains are quite frequent, which has led almost all stones in the area to grow a thin coat of green moss. This territory is located near the Morudhain's Sacred Stones, on the closest area the Moru Country has to fertile ground.

Moss Rock folk have somewhat darker hair and greener eyes than other Morudhain, while their complexions are thinner and paler. They dress more ornately as well, often wearing whole animal hides, conspicuous body marks and more notorious jewellery. For the Moss Rock people, all activities, from hunting and foraging to sleeping and walking, have a symbolic significance, which they enact with simple yet meaningful rituals. They of course produce the best druids and tribal clerics of their race.

The Silver Mirror Tribe

People of the Silver Mirror tribe are milk-skinned, fire-haired and emerald-eyed; their stares, voices and mannerisms of such intensity they could be compared to those of elves. They do not dress in hides like most other Morudhain but in linen and cloth, and even their warriors have an air of unnatural glamour about their every move. They are more given to laughter and music than other Morudhain tribes, yet they are no less grim or hostile towards strangers. They are a relatively small tribe, yet they have won most of the tribal wars they have fought.

The Silver Mirrors live to the north of Mount Moru, halfway between the mountain's north slope and the country's northern border. The white rocks in this area have been the tribe's home for more centuries than anyone can remember – and probably shall continue to be so until the tribe has died out.

THE DRAGON STONE CLAN

I should make a special statement here to concentrate on the Dragon Stone clan, not because they are my kin but for their peculiar history and characteristics.

The Dragon Stone clan lives on the expanse northeast of Mount Moru, one of the bleakest territories in the country besides being side by side with the almost-green eastern plains. The Dragon Stone Morudhain are like their land – the harshest and deepest folk in the Moru Country. Physically they are unremarkable for their race's standard, with lean limbs, tan skin, greyish-green eyes and dull red hair. They wear sparse jewellery and thin cured leather clothes; they carry bronze and iron weapons of crude but effective design. What makes the Dragon Stone clan stand out are their strange cultural choices and their self-given title as outcasts of their race.

The Dragon Stone

First and foremost among the elements that made the Dragon Stone clan different, there was their choice of a patron deity. Where other tribes chose Mahua the Mother or Crannoch of the Spear, or even Ehina or Seadann, the Dragon Stone clan chose to worship the Old Dragon, precisely the deity that should not be worshipped according to Morudhain folklore. The Old Dragon created the Morudhain race by destroying paradise in the process; this made other tribes shun him but the Dragon Stone clan took it in as their creed – they were the death of the world; they were the cursed ones.

More than everything else, the Dragon Stone clan worships the great standing stone that gave the tribe its name. This Dragon Stone is a ten foot tall monolith, erected by unknown means in the middle of barren country, around which the tribe built several rune-marked mounds. The Stone itself owes its name to the dragon effigy carved on it – and to the poem. The famous *Dragon Stone Poem*, written on the monolith by unknown hands, has been translated into the Common tongue and studied by sages all over the realm but it was first seen here, in the lands of the Dragon Stone clan. The tribe's legends hold the poem was written by the Old Dragon himself, while historians prefer to think it was the work of primitive Morudhain, enough generations back for the current tribe to believe it happened in the dawn of time. This is the text of the poem, reproduced in its entirety:

- I. *Death dragon for the green hours,*
- II. *Dead dragon by coppery dawn;*
- III. *Death dragon in pale chill morning,*
- IV. *Dead dragon by golden sun;*
- V. *Death dragon for the blue clouds,*
- VI. *Death dragon the fire afar;*

- VII. *Dead dragon for the bronze evening,*
 VIII. *Dead dragon with silver stars;*
- IX. *Dead dragon for the brass moon,*
 X. *Death dragon by moonless night;*

No Dragon¹ *for the twelfth darkness,*
 No Dragon *for the twelfth light.*

¹As an interesting note, the exact translation from the Morudhain should be ‘Nothing-Dragon’, which could mean ‘no dragon’ but also ‘the Dragon of Nothing’ (Note by the Researchers)

The last two lines of the poem, different from the previous ten, have been cause for debate among scholars, particularly because they are not numbered. Their meaning is still subject to discussion, with the sages suggesting wildly variant theories; the most extravagant sustain that there is a mystic significance to the lack of numbers in the two verses and the most realistic assuming someone else added those verses later. Suffice it to say the Dragon Stone and its poem remain a central element of the Dragon Stone clan’s identity and faith. For the Dragon Stone clan, this stone is the last message from the Old Dragon and thus it is a direct link to their patron god.

The Schism

Local folklore states that, when the Morudhain burst in revolt against their Athan masters during the Fall of the Athan Kingdom, the Dragon Stone clan refused to take part. They simply retreated into their lands, allowing the remaining tribes to pay for the freedom of the Morudhain people with their blood, while the Dragon Stone clan silently worshipped their god in their wasteland. It is hard to affirm or deny these claims; both because the facts happened so long ago and because the Dragon Stone clan itself has never confirmed or denied the story. Furthermore, if it really happened, there is no clue as to why the Dragon Stone clan would have refused to fight the Athans, the foremost theory being that they feared the Athans’ Dragon Lord as an avatar of their own deity. Whatever the truth, legend records these events as the First Schism, the first time ever a Morudhain tribe would not give its aid to the cause of its race.

The Villain

The Dragon Stone clan sees itself as the villain in the play of Morudhain history; what remains a mystery is why. Is it because they worship the dragon of death instead of a god? Is it because they did not

help their kin during the revolt against the Athans so many centuries ago? Even more, why *did* they choose the Dragon? Why *did* they choose not to fight? Perhaps it was the other way around – perhaps it was the Dragon that chose the Dragon Stone clan as his children. Perhaps they were the first mortal men, Those-with-Death, left behind by their gods when the sacrifice of Gamageth brought death to the world. Perhaps, as first men, theirs was the burden of worshipping the creature that spawned them, the ultimate force of death, their True God that was stronger and more unfathomable than the deities of their brethren. Perhaps, as the Old Dragon’s children, the responsibility to worship it was theirs alone, so other Morudhain could live freely, out of the Old Dragon’s shadow.

The Dragon Stone clan came to revere the forbidden god and received a stigma for denying the gods of their race. Yet, perhaps this stigma is the mark of an immortal duty, a forgotten lineage – a mark not of shame but of pride. As a friend and brother to the Dragon Stone clan, I prefer to think so.

THE SECOND SCHISM – THE TRIBE INSIDE THE MOUNT

Being an Appendix to Fiall Garnwynn’s Notes on the Dragon Stone Clan

By the Royal Researchers of Manderachi

As Fiall Garnwynn was writing his last words before he tragically abandoned the noble path of literature, nearly two decades ago, the second great split of the Dragon Stone clan was taking place, this time coming from within. During research for the present volume, it came to the researchers’ attention that a charismatic matriarch called Aedhaine had led thousands of Morudhain of the Dragon Stone clan, including men, women and children, back into Mount Moru to reattempt the colonisation of Mount Moru, despite it being forbidden by her people’s law. We do not know if Fiall Garnwynn was aware of these events or, if he did, of the reasons he had for never mentioning it in his extensive works. According to what these researchers could gather from local history and popular accounts, a great number of Morudhain people, all of them belonging to the Dragon Stone clan, settled in the upper levels of the Mount Moru caves and actually lived there for many years, building what now are known as the entrance mines to Mount Moru. This Morudhain settlement was exiled from the Morudhain race, so they traded with nobody, not even with the Meadowvale folk. It is believed they lived in the upper mountain levels for many years and

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then disappeared completely, curiously at the same time as the unfortunate passing of Fiall Garnwynn himself. As this clan, which we shall call Aedhaine clan in honour of its alleged founder and spiritual leader, disappeared completely without leaving a single trace, it falls on us to speculate as to their final fate.

By all accounts, these Dragon Stone clan separatists were under the leadership of the great druid matriarch known as Aedhaine. Apparently, this woman believed the Old Dragon had left a secret message for her people somewhere inside Mount Moru; she claimed the well-known Dragon Stone poem (also referred to and fully transcribed by Fiall Garnwynn in these pages) was a clue to this divine message. With this notion, Aedhaine made a secret copy of the Dragon Stone poem in a portable stone slab and then set to gathering hundreds upon hundreds of followers, who followed her as a prophetess for the holy words she carried in her hand. According to the stories, Aedhaine left everything behind – house, husband, family – to embark on her quest; everything except for her second child, which she took along for so far unrevealed reasons. Once she gathered enough people for her cause, she led thousands of followers in an exodus from Dragon Stone lands and into Mount Moru, armed with her copy of the Dragon Stone poem as their only law and sacred text. After a supposedly successful decade of living inside the upper mountain levels, the Aedhaine clan disappeared without a trace, taking their copy of the Dragon Stone with them. It is speculated their disappearance might have had something to do with the ever-increasing concentration of hostile goblins and other humanoids inside the mountain – however, there were no signs of battle or invasion, suggesting the Aedhaine Clan abandoned their home a few weeks before the first goblins settled in Mount Moru. However, Mount Moru's reputation and the utter lack of news for more than a year leave these researchers little room for doubt: Whether it was goblins or other creatures, perhaps darker and less natural, the Aedhaine clan must have fallen foul of the unnatural denizens of Mount Moru – or perhaps they still wander on, forever turned into shades in the evil depths.

Nonhuman Tribes

Besides the Morudhain, there are many other races inhabiting the Moru Country, most of them nonhuman, most of them living below or inside Mount Moru.

Goblinoids

There are several tribes and settlements of goblins, hobgoblins and their kin throughout the caves, crevices and chasms of the Morudhain lands. They constantly fight the Morudhain for the small pockets of territory they share, with the Morudhain usually maintaining the upper hand. Other than these occasional raids in Morudhain territory, the goblins rarely leave their caves and have virtually no contact with humans. Once, the goblin warlord Agog led a massive raid against the southern village of Meadowvale, during which thousands of goblins died against the defences of the town. After that, the goblins' numbers – and their bravery – were severely diminished and they kept to their dens ever since, except to attack Morudhain camps a few times a year. There have been no peaceful relations of any kind between goblins and humans in the Moru Country.

The daily life of goblins, as their culture, is almost completely unknown to humans. The few goblin caves that have been raided by Morudhain warriors or adventuring mercenaries reveal a very collective society, where such luxuries as separate housing or privacy are largely unknown, with all goblins huddling under the same cavern roof. It is a safe bet such a state of affairs would encourage no end of fighting among the goblins, and would explain their lack of discipline.

Adventurers

Goblin adventurers or lone travellers are quite rare in the Moru Country, as even those that reject their own people and way of life find the outside world is much scarier than the world they left behind. Worse still, the few goblins that dare to attempt a life on their own outside their race's territory are often met with the rejection and disgust of other humanoid races, which loathe goblins almost universally. All of these factors conspire to steer goblins away from the adventurer's path.

Language

Most goblins of the Moru country speak only their own primitive, guttural language. Even the few specimens that speak Common prefer to communicate in the Goblin tongue, as their limited wits are unsuited for complex spying strategies and their warlike attitude leaves little need for inter-racial diplomacy.

Common Activities

Other than hunting and pillaging, it is unknown what the goblins do for a living. Most of their armour

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and weapons is adapted or copied from those they steal from human encampments, and they are not very good builders. Therefore, it could be assumed – though this writer highly doubts it – that goblins slack their time away, thinking of tomorrow's raid or next month's invasion.

Social Roles

Goblins, though undisciplined, have a very clear military pecking order, with every goblin having someone below his station (except for the younger children) or above it (except for the goblin king). In an army, every goblin knows his rank and those of other goblins, though he is unlikely to respect these ranks. Truthfully, goblins seem to respect only the strongest, both in war and at home.

Mysticism

Moru goblins revere a pantheon of brutal, bloodthirsty monsters, apparently ruled by a warrior-goblin-king deity; however, recently they seem to have turned to a new god. If our available lore of the usual goblin deities is sorely lacking, our knowledge about this new goblin god is even less – though several clues would seem to indicate this new god is a kind of lesser demon, probably a powerful monster from Mount Moru that tricked the goblins into reverence.

Trade

Goblins do not trade with humans – they steal. All raids on goblin homes have turned up nothing of their own making, except for crude stone and leather implements, which would be worthless to most humans. Thus goblins have nothing to trade, either by diplomacy or by force.

The Rule

Goblins are ruled by kings, though their organisation is so frail there might have been more than one goblin with the title simultaneously, which will obviously lead to internal wars that only end when one of the two (or more) kings defeats his challengers. A goblin king rules by intimidation and willpower, for if he loosens his grip even a little, he is likely to be backstabbed by any of his subjects wishing to take the crown – which in all likelihood will happen anyway, yet an iron hand is guaranteed to extend a goblin king's rule by a few years at least.

ORCS

Many orc villages and outposts have been spotted along the Morudhain Lands' eastern border. The orcs live off raiding and pillaging on both sides of

the border, though they have never been numerous enough to form a strong invasion force. They trade with the Eastern Morudhain and goblin tribes as often as they raid them.

It goes without saying the orc culture is barbaric and violent. They do believe in brute strength and progress through pillage and conquest, which is the reason most of their interaction with other races is via armed conflict. They have also been known to trade peacefully – yet warily – with some of the eastern Morudhain tribes, on the rare occasions they deem it more convenient than open battle.

Note from the researchers: The orc tribes had been content with staying near their borders, having never gone deeper into the country until a few months past, when some scattered orc mercenary bands were seen marching towards Mount Moru for as yet unexplained reasons.

Barbaric Honour

Despite their bloodthirstiness, the orc tribes of the Morudhain border have a rudimentary barbaric code, which includes dying for duty and glory, while never showing mercy or weakness of any kind. The orc code is, of course, quite foreign to kinder or more civilised cultures; humans are unlikely to understand what orcs see as 'honourable' behaviour – A Moru orc will keep his word when dealing with someone he considers honourable as well, though he will not be compassionate to a begging enemy.

Adventurers

Orc adventurers are not as rare as it would seem; for all their brutal thick-headedness, the orc race produces many brave and audacious individuals, willing to take their violence out on the unknown world instead of defenceless neighbours. The great majority of orc adventurers are of half-human breed, which is understandable given the greater flexibility and urbanity inherited from their non-orc blood. Both hybrids and purebred orcs find jobs easily as mercenaries and thugs, their brute strength a highly sought feature among the military and criminal worlds everywhere.

Language

The Orc language is as rude and offensive as orcs themselves; however, they mostly use it only among themselves. When dealing with other races, whether to haggle or to curse, they resort to the Common tongue.

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Common Activities

Orcs excel at combat; although their communal activities are still unstudied, it is a known fact they wage war constantly, both with other races and among themselves; even in peace times they are quite likely to rent themselves as mercenaries for a living. They are not incredibly good hunters, farmers or builders, which may account for why they need to raid and pillage so much. It is just that no human sage knows what they do after the battle. Some Morudhain traders have displayed orc-made bone ornaments of mediocre quality, yet quite fascinating; this would imply at least a few orcs have an interest in the crafts.

Social Roles

Moru orcs have a simple yet well-defined social structure. Every village or settlement has a chief, who in turn responds to the regional chieftain, which passes for a noble title among orcs. Below the chiefs there are four or five military ranks, below which are common soldiers and serfs, who are completely at the mercy of even their lesser superiors.

Mysticism

Orc rituals and beliefs all have to do with blood, strength and death. They have a fairly well defined pantheon, commanded by great orc warrior-gods; when they pray to these gods it is usually for combat purposes, such as causing fear in the enemy or asking for strength and ferocity in battle.

Trade

Orcs trade in weapons, tools and services, as well as the crude bone ornaments that the eastern Morudhain seem to like so much. In exchange, they look for furs, food and complex tools; when barter fails, they have been known to pay for what they want with money stolen from previous raids.

The Rule

The closest the Moru orcs have to a ruler are their clan chieftains, which would be equivalent to human barons and other lesser feudal lords; each chieftain rules over several tribal chiefs. These chieftains have little to do with their subjects except when asking for taxes and tributes; as rulers, they have the right and responsibility to organise and lead their race's armies.

People Inside the Mountain

The interior of Mount Moru is home to many races and cultures, all of them nonhuman since the Athan

race became extinct. The following is a listing of such races and cultures as can be found below the mount according to local rumour; serious readers are well advised to remember most of this listing is based on gossip and it is quite possible that Mount Moru is in fact uninhabited.

THE GIANT CAVES

*Close your windows from the storm
Lest ol' winter find your bed
He'll be comin' in a sled
Foul of face and big of form*

*Let the fire keep you warm
Lest ol' winter find your home
Lest the blizzard giants come
And lay waste unto your farm*

*Close your windows from the storm
Lest the blizzard giants come.*

—Morudhain nursery rhyme

The giant looked at me, sir. No, I couldna see his eyes but I knew he was looking at me alright. You could tell. Why? Because's I gots a chill on my spine, thas why.

—Anagh (13 years old)

There have been legends about giants living below the base of Mount Moru ever since Morudhain folklore began. Recently, the legends have been reinforced by sightings and other accounts that may or may not prove the existence of at least one giant city in the area. The giants portrayed are of three kinds. First, the fire giants, or *surtrim* as they are called in Darran's *Giants of the World*, described as towering, red-skinned, bearded brutes, able to shoot fire from their hands; second, the frost giants, a breed of fair-haired, blue-skinned giants dressed as northern barbarians, which are reputed to blow frosty blizzards with their breath; finally, a race of giants that are not only much larger than normal men but also completely made of animated stone. These three breeds of giants – fire, frost and stone – are supposed to coexist, trade and wage great wars among themselves somewhere below the mountain – as they have never made true contact with the human civilisation, it is up to the reader to decide whether they exist or not.

Nothing is known about the giants' daily life, language or society; they have never contacted humans, so



nobody knows what crafts or trades they practice or who are their leaders. Each of the three Moru giant races is supposed to be under the rule of a mighty king, which may or may not be waging war against the other two. Their gods would surely include Surtur, the fire lord, as well as dark forgotten spirits of the mountain such as the Cult of the Cave. Beyond that, the culture of the Moru giants is as unknown and unproven as their very existence.

DEEP GNOMES

Far below the ground, somewhere in the great caves and subterranean passages under Mount Moru, there are supposed to be vast kingdoms mirroring and often surpassing the human civilisations on the surface. These realms would be inhabited by dark, underground versions of dwarves, elves and gnomes. So far the only one of these races to come to the surface and actually make contact with humans – in fact the only nonhuman race to actually make peaceful contact with humans in the Morudhain lands – were the deep gnomes, called *svirfneblin* in their own tongue.

The deep gnomes appear on the surface once every few years, to make some trade with the Stonehold dwarves and the Morudhain living closest to Mount Moru. According to their own accounts – and this is

far more than we have for the stories regarding other nonhumans in Mount Moru – the deep gnomes live in a city called Ogginnogg, many miles below Mount Moru. This city is fully underground, inaccessible from the outside save by paths known only to the *svirfneblin*. Despite their occasional visits to the surface, the deep gnomes have never invited or led a non-gnome into their city, so all we know about it is its description.

Despite the deep gnomes' secretiveness, we know more about their culture and society than about any other nonhuman race living below Mount Moru. They are a down-to-earth, concrete race, less given to mirth and pranks than other gnome breeds; they are also astonishingly efficient and practical when relating to others, rarely letting their emotions or cultural traits show. In this they resemble the Morudhain, for they are also stern and impassive, yet the gnomes do not seem as bitter or passionate.

Guile

Shrewdness is a valued quality among deep gnomes, as evidenced by their alert and focused demeanour. A sharp-witted mind has two basic uses for the gnomes, both deeply rooted to their culture and racial outlook: First, it keeps a deep gnome on his toes against potential treachery, which deep gnomes have learned to expect at all times; second, it helps a deep gnome to perform all tasks better – and for the deep gnomes a good performance is often the difference between survival and extinction.

Mistrust

As far as we know, the relations of Moru deep gnomes are based around a single concept – mistrust. They are wary and discreet in all their dealings with anyone not of their race, often with their own kind as well. Life in the harsh underground taught the gnomes to mistrust everyone and everything; the recent drow invasion on their lands (see page 65 in *Tales of Mount Moru*) proved them right.

Adventurers

Svirfneblin adventurers are fairly common when compared to those from other nonhuman races such as goblins or orcs. Most of them limit their travels to the underground, which offers plenty of opportunities for advancement, treasure and thrills; conversely, those that adventure on the surface have to deal with cultural shock and other social difficulties; also, they are virtually forced to lead a nocturnal life, due to their race's natural sensitivity to light.

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Language

According to those that have heard it – this humble writer admits not being among them – the svirfneblin tongue sounds like a chattering, soft murmur, which makes it appear like they are always whispering secrets to each other. This is not far from the truth, as svirfneblin most often use their own language to speak amongst themselves about something they do not want a member of another race to hear. Amongst themselves, they also use their language freely; they of course do not teach it to anyone else. When dealing directly with other races, deep gnomes use a heavily accented Common tongue, mostly for the sake of efficiency; however, they still resort to their own tongue when they do not want others to listen or understand – which is quite often the case.

Common Activities

Deep gnomes are superb miners and spelunkers; they have a natural affinity with underground passages and environments that surpasses even that of dwarves, and they take full advantage of it for their industry. They are also skilled craftsmen and builders, which shows in their small yet practical cities and tools. Their underground hunters and scouts are renowned for their efficiency and skill, which is often likened to magical qualities.

Social Roles

The society of deep gnomes is somewhat classless, with community leaders seen as public officers rather than a true authority. There is a svirfneblin aristocratic tradition, though it is seen as a responsibility rather than a privilege, which is hard to understand for other humanoid races. Men and women are equal in society, where all are expected to work hard to help the community.

Mysticism

Deep gnomes have a great pantheon of gods, which includes most of the best-known gnomish deities. Those living at the underground city of Ogginnogg worship Dibbraban, the Crafty One (see page 34). Rituals to Dibbraban are few and sober, as the realistic deep gnomes have little time for flashy displays of worship.

Trade

Trade is the very reason that humans even know the existence of deep gnomes. Were it not for the occasional need the gnomes have felt to come to the surface and attempt to get trade goods, surface races

would have never learned of their presence below Mount Moru. According to the Morudhain tribes they commerce with, the gnomes sell strange jewellery and tools of outstanding quality, in exchange for commodities not easily found underground such as cloth and wood. Often, the gnomes pay directly in gold or gems, which seem to have less material value for them than they have for surface races; nonetheless, svirfneblin gems and jewellery are always true works of art.

The Rule

The deep gnomes of Mount Moru have a single leader, the Lord of Ogginnogg, which is an inherited title of great prestige but not much real power, as this writer could gather from his research. Despite belonging to true royalty, the Lord of Ogginnogg is treated as any other member of svirfneblin society, with the specific task of being an example and inspiration for his people. The deep gnomes have never given more details about their Lord, who he is or what his name is.

OGGINNOGG

From what little the deep gnomes have told about their city we can gather that it includes dark packed stone streets, illuminated by green phosphorescent lamps and tall stone buildings. The city I have imagined from these tales, though strange and unfamiliar, is too well described to be mere fancy. I intend to go there someday, if I ever find the way...

Note: at the time of this compilation, nearly a century after Fiall Garnwynn's notes, it has been nearly a decade since the last deep gnome was seen on the surface of the Moru Country, which by all accounts is too long a time even for the long lapses between their usual appearances. Perhaps the deep gnomes suddenly decided to stop coming to the surface; perhaps they moved their city somewhere else; it is also possible some ill has befallen the city, especially if the Moru underground is half as dangerous as it is reputed to be.

The Lost Kingdom of Atha

Although the lost people disappeared more than 2,000 years ago, their culture is better known to scholars than those of many races still living in the area; for that reason and for completeness' sake, I shall include an abridged commentary about what is currently known about the Ancient Athans and their empire.

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PLAYING IN OGGINNOGG

The city of Ogginnogg is located between levels **L** and **M** of the Mount Moru dungeon (see *The Path of Archaneroth*). There are only three paths into the svirfneblin city – the passages at Areas **L9** and **M1** inside the dungeon (see *The Path of Archaneroth*) and the secret well of Ogginnogg (see below), of which not even the dark elves know, which the deep gnomes used to reach the surface until a few years ago.

Should travellers from the surface reach the city of Ogginnogg by any route, they will be greeted with cold mistrust mixed with burning curiosity. The gnomes are not particularly hostile but they have learned to be wary of everything, particularly with their drow tormentors so close. Their general alignment is neutral, so adventurers should expect neither open mistreatment nor immediate kindness. For more information about the relations between the drow and the deep gnomes, see the corresponding chapter in *Tales of Mount Moru*.

Ogginnogg (large town): Standard Power Centre (AL N); 3,000 gp limit; Assets 675,000 gp; Population 4,600; Isolated (gnome 4,416, drow 92, dwarf 46, other races 46).

Authority figures: Lord Gagli, male svirfneblin Ari5.

Other authorities – Council of Lords, Ari2(2), Ari1(3); Father Yak'mazyik (high priest of Dibbraban), male svirfneblin Clr7; Old Ugothi (town elder), male svirfneblin Com13; Daen'syn of Unh Anhegr (drow ambassador), male drow elf Ftr7/Wiz5.

Important Characters: P'toech (captain of the drow guard), male drow elf Ftr8/Sor4; Daguggin (owner of the Bastion Inn), male svirfneblin Com6; Zabbek (best blacksmith in town), male svirfneblin Exp5; Ubbuth (old prospector), male svirfneblin Exp11; Lamakka (captain of the svirfneblin guard), War8; Yathu (owner of the *Grimgravel* Pub), male svirfneblin Exp2; Gazgo (town jeweller), male svirfneblin Exp2; Luggo (mine overseer), male svirfneblin Exp5.

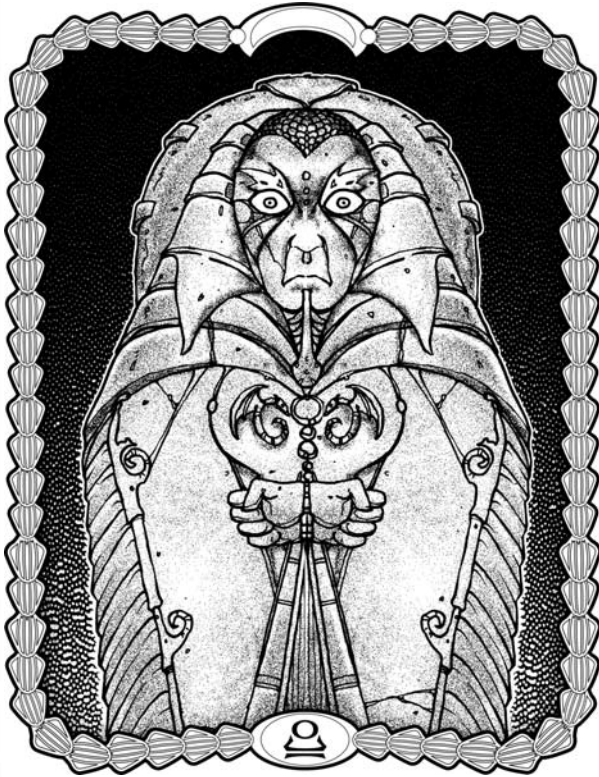
Others: Church of Dibbraban, Adp7, Clr3, Clr1 (4), Drd3, Drd1, Mnk5, Mnk2, Mnk1 (4), Pln5, Pln2; Drow guard, Ftr7/Clr3, Ftr3/Rog8, Ftr1/Rog4 (2), Rgr4/Rog8, War1 (8); Svirfneblin Guard, Ari1, Bbn5, Bbn3 (2), Bbn1 (4), Ftr3, Ftr1 (2), Mnk2, Pln2, Pln1 (4), Rgr2, Rgr1 (4), Rog2 (4), Rog1, War4 (2), War2 (4); Town Militia, Exp1 (4), Com6, Com3 (4), Com1 (221); Miners' Guild, Com1 (261), Exp1 (4), Exp2 (2), Rgr2, Rog1 (2); School of Secret Stone, Adp3, Adp1 (2), Brd6, Brd1, Sor2, Wiz5, Wiz2 (2), Wiz1 (4); The Rock Singers (celebrity band), Brd3(2), Brd1 (2); remaining population, Adp3, Adp1 (2), Brd1, Com1 (3,945), Drd6, Drd3, Drd1(3), Rog2 (2), Rog1 (5), Sor5, Sor2, Sor1 (4).

The Secret Well

The deep gnomes built a great well, nearly three miles deep, which connects their city to the realm of the surface. In the past, this well has allowed svirfneblin explorers and merchants to easily access the surface via a simple mechanism, where up to 30 Small creatures may sit on a great wooden 'bucket' and then be simply pulled up at a great speed until they reach a hidden cave on the surface. After the city was taken over by drow (see *Tales of Mount Moru*), the svirfneblin shut the well off and cancelled their last scheduled trip to the surface, so as to not alert the dark elves to the presence of potential human victims in the surface.

Both of the Well's accesses have been condemned so as to prevent the drow from using it. The surface exit is a natural cave hidden somewhere in the southeastern slopes of Mount Moru; only a few of the deep gnomes know its real location. The lower access to the well is hidden in a secret chamber in the Ogginnogg mine, whose location is a secret even for the gnomes' drow masters; in fact, most of the svirfneblin population is unaware the well still exists. Should the well be opened again, it would be possible to travel from Ogginnogg to the surface and back in less than one hour.

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The Athan culture appeared some 3,000 years before our time, probably arriving from another land or even from another world; some sages speculate they might simply have been a particularly advanced Morudhain clan, with access to better technology and a more complex culture. They settled in the unfathomable grottoes beneath Mount Moru, establishing their major cities there. Nobody knows why such an advanced folk chose this barren desolation as their home; some theories hold they were exiled from somewhere else, while some others suggest they may have actually been a subterranean strain of humans that arrived to Mount Moru from below as opposed to above. Be it as it may, the Athans did settle inside the mount; in the next few centuries, they had built the greatest empire the Moru Country has ever known, enslaved the entire Morudhain race and turned the most dangerous wilderness in the region into a civilised realm. When they fell, they left countless ruins of their fabled cities inside Mount Moru, most of which are still awaiting discovery. The research and exploration of the Athan civilisation remains the greatest task any Moru historian can undertake.

By all accounts, Athans were a tall, gaunt race, fair of skin but with dark hair and eyes. They dressed in long cotton robes and wore complex and ornate jewellery, which usually had a ritual significance beyond its simple decorative function.

THE ATHAN CULTURE

Athans were a solemn and self-aggrandising culture, lovers of great ceremony in every aspect of their daily life; at least, this is what the remains of their sacred buildings and texts seem to indicate. Apparently they saw themselves as actually being a superior human race, with the blood of dragons or gods in their veins.

Death and Eternity

Athans were obsessed with death, to the point they actually regarded their dead more highly than their living. They built incredibly complex and luxurious tombs and memorials, as opposed to the rather bare living quarters for their people. Their rituals and legends spoke of eternal life beyond death and regarded death as an elevated state, to which apparently all Athans aspired as the final reunion with their divine spirit. In this they resembled the Morudhain – both cultures saw eternity, immortality and divinity as belonging to a ‘world without death’; while mortal creatures, including humans, were ‘Those-With-Death’. However, the Morudhain saw

THE ATHAN SECRET TONGUE

Even to this day, there are many ancient texts written in this ancient language, which makes it useful for characters to consider mastering it.

Using the Secret Tongue

To successfully read the Athan Secret Tongue, a character must cast *read magic* and then succeed a Decipher Script check (DC 20); success means the character understands the text in question. A *comprehend languages* spell or effect allows any character to understand the spoken or written Secret Tongue as normal. A character that has successfully understood the Secret Tongue – either spoken or written – at least once may learn the Secret Tongue permanently, as detailed below.

Learning the Secret Tongue

Any character that has successfully understood the Secret Tongue at least once may learn it permanently by spending 2 skill ranks to learn the language and then taking the Secret Tongue feat (see sidebar). A character that has learned the Secret Tongue can henceforth understand it without casting spells or making skill checks, plus he can use the Secret Tongue for additional benefits as detailed in the Secret Tongue feat description.

New Feat: Secret Tongue [General]

You have learned the secrets of the Athan secret tongue. You can speak, read and write the Athan tongue without problem, as well as use it to utter or inscribe magical words.

Benefits: You can understand the Athan Secret Tongue automatically, without resorting to magic or skill checks. In addition, you may activate scrolls written in the Secret Tongue without resorting to *read magic* or Spellcraft checks. Furthermore, if you use the Secret Tongue to write a spell on a scroll (via the Scribe Scroll feat) or on a wizard's spellbook, anyone attempting to read or copy the spell must succeed on a Decipher Script check (DC 20) to understand it. Finally, if the spell thus written has a verbal component, it gains a +1 bonus to its save DC due to the magical power of the Secret Tongue.

Special: You must have succeeded at understanding the Secret Tongue at least once. You must also spend 2 skill ranks to learn the Secret Tongue.

death as a daily reality, while the Athans deified it as a god or ideal to be achieved. To the humble opinion of this writer, it was this obsession with their own ghosts that caused the Athan culture to decay and disappear in the nothingness they all worshipped so much – or perhaps all of them *did* become gods in the end, and departed this world...

Knowledge

The Athans gave great value to study and knowledge, as evidenced by their incredible discoveries and advances in realms such as literature, mathematics, theology and arcane sciences. Sages were given political authority and respect, even their most frivolous words and phrases becoming decree and gospel for the Athan folk.

Language

There were two Athan languages. First there was the Common Athan language, which was based on – and quite similar to – the Draconic tongue. By studying and understanding the Draconic language, it is easy to understand Common Athan. Then, there was the Athan Secret Tongue, spoken only by high-caste priests and wizards. The Secret Tongue was

developed using forgotten arcane means; the result was a forbidden language, which only those with a connection to the dark arts could utter, write or even understand. As of today, there are only a handful of sages that have deciphered and learned the Secret Tongue and all of them have paid for it with a piece of their soul. The Secret Tongue was not meant for mortal minds to understand.

The forbidden language of the Athaeon, created by mages and spoken by kings, was not meant for living men, for only the dead and the immortal could understand its meaning. According to the star influences of its letraic systems as indicated by the law of numbers, the Athan Secret Tongue is boon to the dead and bane to the immortal.

Those wishing to learn the Secret Tongue must procure a piece of text written in this language, as the original means of its creation have been lost to eternity. Before the written text, the mage must recite the incantation of understanding taught by Azlius in his Omnia Arcanis, so as to clarify the text. The mage may then study and memorise the Secret Tongue as a normal language, though if he succeeds he must be prepared, for it is likely undesirable spirits will come to him for counsel and company.

–Anonymous, *Of Secret Words and the Arcane*

Common Activities

By all accounts, it seems Athan cities enjoyed all the commodities of a great surface metropolis, thanks to extensive commerce networks with the surface realms, as well as the toil and sweat of thousands of slaves. Slavery was indeed a common practice among the Athans; mostly they enslaved folk of other races, particularly the Morudhain, though they also had slaves of their own race to serve Athan lords and nobles.

The Athans were great architects too, as indicated by the perfect structuring and advanced design of even their simplest buildings. They were also known for their highly sophisticated embalming and burial techniques, very similar to what the Morudhain used for their own ceremonial mounds but of course much more advanced. Many Athan mummies have been recovered in an almost perfect state of preservation.

Social Roles

The Athans had a well-defined caste system, where everybody knew their exact station and lived

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according to it, showing a compliance that bordered on ritual worship. As per this system, certain humans had a 'divine' quality the Athans called Ka, which put them above common mortals. A person's social rank was dependent on his degree of Ka and a greater rank signified a mightier Ka. Only few humans actually had Ka and could be called touched by the divine; all Athans saw themselves as having it, even their slaves. The following is the order of Ka ranks according to the Athan caste system, from lowest to highest:

- Tahin (non-Athan slaves, including Morudhain and nonhuman prisoners)
- Katu (slaves)
- Kashainn (peasants)
- Kathuga (soldiers)
- Ka-aroth (landowners and merchants)
- Katari (public officials, including military officers)
- Ka-oghou (sages and scholars, particularly wizards)
- Ka-iri (lesser priests)
- Ka-a-tari (nobles and warrior-kings)
- Ka-a-thaa (higher priests and priest-kings)

In practice, all Athan castes were roughly equal in station, except for slaves, which were actually considered objects on the possession of their masters, and nobles (the two highest castes), which had the right to do as they pleased with their subjects for they were nearly gods themselves. As can be reasoned from the foreshown list, clerics did have a lot of political power in the mundane world, having in fact a great influence on government decisions.

Mysticism

Athan religion was a complex affair, mostly related to the great respect the Athans had towards death and eternity. There were complex rites for nearly every daily activity, from waking up in the morning to trading to eating. Death preparation rites were by far the most important aspect of Athan mysticism; it often took months or even years to properly prepare a dead body for departing, as Athan priests wanted to make sure the dead person did ascend to divinity – or

the deathless oblivion that the Athans saw as divinity. As a result of this intense death worship, the Athans soon left their weaker death gods and embraced the Dragon Lord, the embodiment of eternal death, as their main deity.

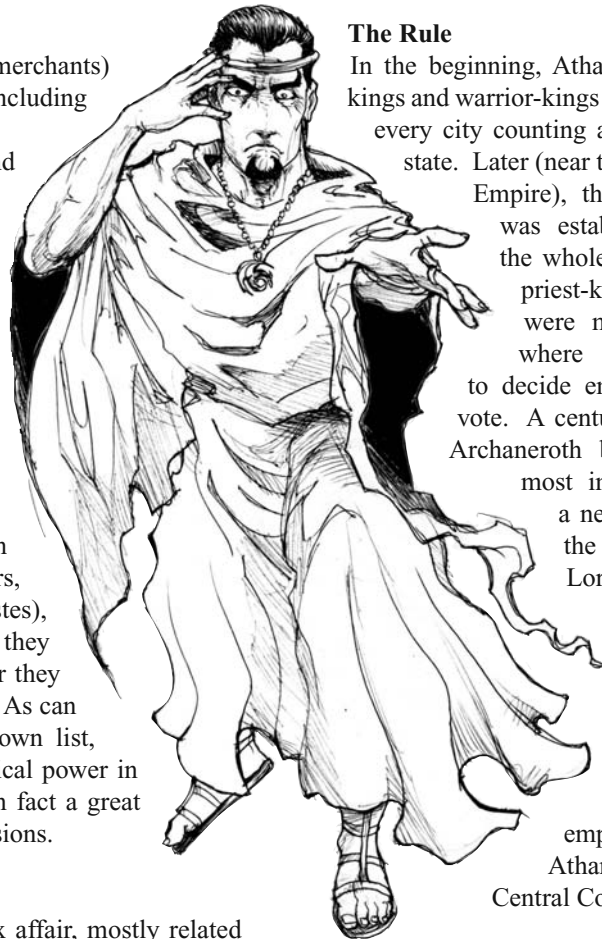
Trade

The Athan Empire had an extensive trade network that went far beyond the borders of the Moru Country, from which Athans could acquire all the goods, tools and commodities they needed. For all this they paid with gold and exotic ores they mined from their mountain, as well as strange spices, clothes and devices developed by their sages.

The Rule

In the beginning, Atha was ruled by the priest-kings and warrior-kings of each of their cities, with every city counting as a separate, independent state. Later (near the 5th century of the Athan

Empire), the Central Athan Council was established so as to control the whole empire; all of the Athan priest-kings and warrior-kings were members of this council, where they gathered monthly to decide empire affairs by common vote. A century later, when the city of Archaneroth became the greatest and most important of Athan cities, a new ruling title appeared in the Athan nation: that of the Lord of Archaneroth. This was the title given to the current priest-king of Archaneroth but it also meant power over all the Athan Empire. Soon, the Lord of Archaneroth was regarded as an emperor, a ruler of all the Athans with help from the Central Council.



Regarding conquered territories, such as Morudhain lands, the Athans used sheriffs that represented the Athan Empire and were permanently stationed at the conquered territory. These sheriffs were high-ranking officers of the Katari caste, which answered only to the king of their corresponding city; this king in turn answered to the Central Government, conformed by the council of kings and the Lord of Archaneroth himself.

Creatures of the Morudhain Lands

I accept and understand the fact these creatures exist. What mystifies me is how they can survive in a land as barren and lifeless as this...

—Oegham the Explorer

Local Fauna

The Moru Country is known mostly for its harsh terrain, though it is also home to many dangerous and monstrous creatures. The following is an account of the beasts that may be found in the Morudhain wilderness, organised according to the region they may be encountered in.

MORUDHAIN LANDS

The crags and wastes of the Morudhain lands, between the borders and Mount Moru, are teeming with life despite their deserted appearance.

Animals

The largest creatures surviving in the Moru country are particularly hardy breeds of deer and wild horse, though they are quite rare and skilled at avoiding other creatures. Any explorer should count himself lucky if he sees a herd of deer or horses running through the Moru plains. As for the smaller creatures, rats and bats of all kinds infest the Morudhain lands' chasms, caves and gorges, where they hide during the day but swarm out in the night. Swarms of vermin such as spiders and locusts are not uncommon either. Many birds of prey such as ravens and hawks roam the skies, feeding on these small creatures; however, there are also wolves and worgs, which hunt in packs during the night. They feed mostly on rats and mice but they gladly attack deer and horses if they can catch them and will content themselves with the odd lonely human should the need arise.

Other Creatures

Ogres, trolls and their kin are common in the rocky, uneven terrain closest to mount Moru; among these there are some tales about two-headed giants as well. As regards monstrous beasts, there are local folktales relating encounters with deadly basilisks and cockatrices, to which many strangely-shaped rocky formations are attributed; a similar, yet much less popular tale tells about a stone-skinned bull whose breath could also petrify any living creature. Man-beast hybrids, such as lamias and lycanthropes

of all breeds, are reputed to roam the wasteland, seeking human prey. Besides the monsters, there are of course very believable reports of encounters with raiding bands of humanoids, such as bugbears, gnolls, goblins and orcs. Finally, it is also said that undead and other eerie spirits (such as will-o'-wisps) abound in the region, haunting desolate places at night.

OUTER MOUNT MORU

The slopes and peaks of Mount Moru are home to few animal species, except for the occasional hawk or eagle, and some mountain ruminants such as deer or goats. There are rumours of griffons as well, which supposedly prey on all the other animals in the zone. Other than animals, there are several reports about giant-like humanoids such as ogres, trolls and true giants of all breeds, particularly frost giants in winter.

INNER MOUNT MORU

Animals and Monsters

Strange denizens of the dark are reputed to roam inner Mount Moru, such as aboleth, ankhegs, darkmantles, nagas and ooze-like beings; however, these reports are much less frequent and substantiated than those about the fauna outside Mount Moru. Other than this, it is a proven fact that there are bats and rats in great quantities, at least in the upper caves.



Giants and Humanoids

Giant-like creatures such as trolls and true giants are the main characters of most tales about Moru monsters, particularly fire, frost and stone giants. Regarding humanoid races, we know of the deep gnomes from Ogginnogg; there is no doubt they do live in the Moru depths, although the exact location of their city is still unknown. Reports of evil dwarf-like beings may be based on encounters with the deep gnomes – or they may be not, which would mean there is another, more evil dwarfish race below the mountain. According to a couple separate, unreliable reports, a significant settlement of dark elves would also exist deep under Mount Moru. Finally, a particular legend tells of a tribe of strange eyeless humanoids somewhere near the entrance caves, though it has never been proven.

DRAGONS

If we are to believe the stories, dragons should be a fairly common encounter in Mount Moru, although I have never seen one with my own eyes. However, both Morudhain folktales and ancient Athan texts refer to dragons of all types, sizes and colours, found in both the Moru plains and the mountain itself. Their appearance would seem to be somehow linked to the seasons or even a particular time of the day...



Wandering Monster Tables

The following are the encounter tables for the Morudhain wilderness, organised according to region.

SOUTHERN ROADS

This region includes the start of Moru Road on the southern border of the realm, as well as Meadowvale, the Last Shrine and all the surrounding area.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR THE SOUTHERN MORUDHAIN ROADS

D%	Encounter	Statistics
01-15	1d3 dire rats	See 'dire animals' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
16-40	Merchant party – 1 merchant (3 rd level commoner) and 1d3+1 bodyguards (2 nd level fighters)	See the <i>DMG</i> , Chapter Four
41-44	1d4 Tiny monstrous spiders (vermin)	See 'Monstrous Spider' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Three
45-54	1d2 hawks or ravens	See the corresponding sections in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Two
55	Travelling adventurer*	See Tales of Mount Moru
56-75	1d4 road guards (2 nd level fighters)	See 'NPC statistics' the <i>DMG</i> , Chapter Four
76-95	2d6 bandits (1 st level warriors)	See 'NPC classes' in the <i>DMG</i> , Chapter Four
96-00	2d4 goblins	See 'Goblin' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One

*Determine race and class randomly, or use one of the following characters if the players have not encountered them already:

- Api (male gnome Rog1)
- Aurelia Bacchi (female human Wiz1)
- Cormac Drake (male human Rgr1)
- Rann Shieldborne (male human Clr1)

The full statistics for all of these characters are given in the Appendix on page 105 of *Tales of Mount Moru*.

DENIZENS OF THE LAND

MORUDHAIN LANDS

The area referred to herein as the 'Morudhain lands' comprises the wastelands surrounding Mount Moru, as far as the borders of the Moru Country in all directions.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR THE MORUDHAIN LANDS (DAYTIME)

D%	Encounter	Statistics
01-07	7-12 wild horses (light horse)	See 'Horse' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Two
08-21	Swarm (50% rat, 30% spider, 20% locust)	See 'Swarm' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
22-33	2d6 dire rats	See 'Dire Animals' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
34-43	1d2 ravens or hawks	See the corresponding sections in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Two
44-49	1d3 Tiny monstrous spiders	See 'Monstrous Spider' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Three
50-55	1d2 Small monstrous spiders	See 'Monstrous Spider' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Three
56-67	3d4 wolves	See 'Wolf' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Two
68-72	1 ettin	See 'Ettin' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
73-77	1 basilisk	See 'Basilisk' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
78-81	1d2 cockatrices	See 'Cockatrice' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
82-83	1 gorgon	See 'Gorgon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
84-88	1 lamia	See 'Lamia' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
81-94	1 blue dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
95-00	1 bronze dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One

* Roll another d100 for the dragon's age: 01-25 juvenile, 26-75 young adult, 76-00 adult.



DENIZENS OF THE LAND

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR THE MORUDHAIN LANDS (NIGHT TIME)

D%	Encounter	Statistics
01-07	Bat swarm	See 'Swarm' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
09-14	1d2 ogres	See 'Ogre' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
16-20	1 trolls	See 'Troll' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
21-25	1d4 werewolves	See 'Lycanthrope' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
26-30	2d4 wererats	See 'Lycanthrope' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
31-38	2d4 worgs	See 'Worg' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
39-53	2d6 goblins+1 bugbear	See the corresponding sections in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
54-63	2d4 orcs	See 'Orc' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
64-69	1d4+1 ghouls	See 'Ghoul' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
70-77	1d3 wights	See 'Wight' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
78-80	1d2 wraiths	See 'Wraith' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
81-83	1 spectre	See 'Spectre' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
84-90	1 will-o'-wisp	See 'Will-O'-Wisp' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Two
91-95	1 blue dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
96-00	1 bronze dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One

* Roll another d100 for the dragon's age: 01-25 juvenile, 26-75 young adult, 76-00 adult.

OUTER MOUNT MORU

The outer Mount Moru area includes all the outdoor areas of the mountain itself; its slopes, paths and peaks, the Stonehold fortress and the Haunted Lake.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR OUTER MOUNT MORU

D%	Encounter	Statistics
01-17	1d2 hawks	See 'Hawk' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Two
18-35	1d3 eagles	See 'Eagle' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter Two
36-47	1d2 griffons	See 'Griffon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
48-60	1d6 ogres	See 'Ogre' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
61-68	1d4 trolls	See 'Troll' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
69-74	1d2 fire giants	See the corresponding section under 'Giant' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
75-84	1d3 frost giants	See the corresponding section under 'Giant' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
85-90	1 silver dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
91-96	1d2 white dragons*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
97-00	1 visiting dragon**	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One

* Roll another d100 for the dragon's age: 01-25 juvenile, 26-75 young adult, 76-00 adult.

** This encounters includes dragons that do not live in Mount Moru but are attracted to its presence. See **Visiting Dragons for Mount Moru** table.

VISITING DRAGONS FOR MOUNT MORU

D%	Encounter	Statistics
01-19	1 black dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
20-37	1 brass dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
38-55	1 green dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
56-71	1 copper dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
72-86	1 red dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One
87-00	1 gold dragon*	See the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in the <i>MM</i> , Chapter One

* Roll another d100 for the dragon's age: 01-25 juvenile, 26-75 young adult, 76-00 adult.

INSIDE MOUNT MORU

The random encounter tables for the inside area of Mount Moru can be found in *The Path of Archaneroth*. Most dungeon levels described in that book have their own random encounter tables; refer to the corresponding dungeon level section for more information.

New Monsters

The following are creatures that exist only inside Mount Moru – and then only at certain locations within the mount. It is quite likely Mount Moru explorers will never encounter these monsters, even if they should manage to search the mountain thoroughly.

Dragon Storm

Huge Aberration (air, cold, earth, fire, water)

Hit Dice: 36d8+360 (522 hp)

Initiative: +8

Speed: Fly 60 ft. (12 squares) (good)

AC: 30 (–2 size, +4 Dex, +18 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 26

Base attack/Grapple: +27/+42

Attack: Energy touch +33 melee (1d8 acid plus 1d8 cold plus 1d8 electrical plus 1d8 fire)

Full attack: Energy touch +33 melee (1d8 acid plus 1d8 cold plus 1d8 electrical plus 1d8 fire)

Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks:

Energy blast, energy explosion, energy touch

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunities

Saves: Fort +22, Ref +18, Will +20

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 19, Con 30, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats: Ability Focus (energy explosion), Ability Focus (energy touch), Alertness, Blind-Fighting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (energy touch)

Skills: Listen +16, Search +6, Spot +16

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 19

Treasure: None

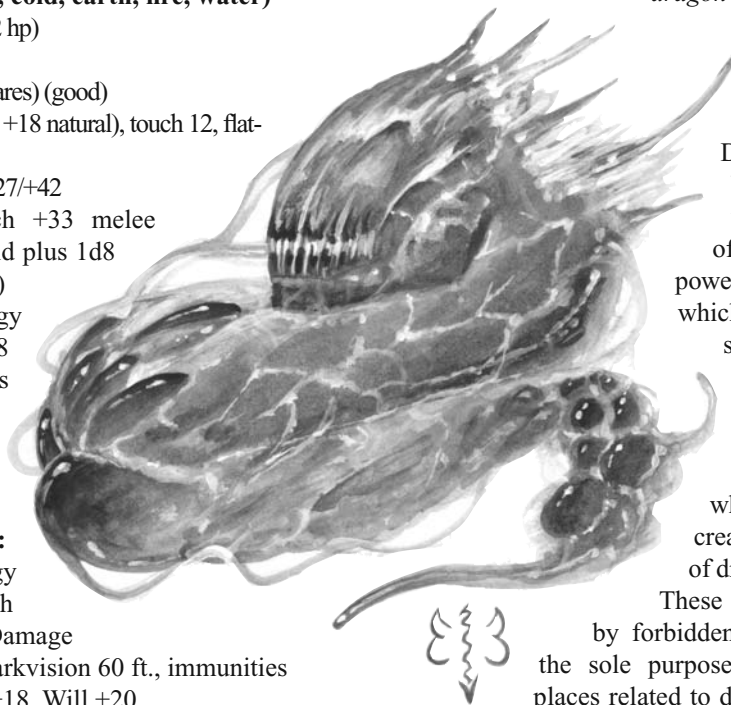
Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 37-48 (Huge), 49-72 HD (Gargantuan)

Level adjustment: —

Feats: Ability Focus (energy explosion), Ability Focus (energy touch), Alertness, Blind-Fighting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (energy touch)

You see what seems to be a cloud of crackling, shifting energy, made up of a staggering array of different energy types. The monster – if this is truly a living creature and not some freakish magical effect – seems to be composed of equal parts ice, lightning, fire, smoke and oozing acid; the overall effect is that of a living, floating cloud of dragon's breath weapons. In fact, after a few moments you realise there is a vaguely dragon-like shape, barely distinguishable in the uncontrolled turmoil of energy.



Dragon storms are a bizarre creation, the weird manifestation of some ancient and powerful draconic magic, which actually gave a semblance of life and sentience to what used to be pure energy. These monsters are indeed what they seem – creatures entirely made of dragon breath weapons.

These abominations, created by forbidden arcane means, have the sole purpose of guarding sacred places related to dragonkind, a task that they are most capable of performing.

COMBAT

A dragon storm attacks in a chaotic frenzy of coalescing, pulsating energy; it never stops until all of its enemies have died.

Energy Blast (Su): By spending a standard action, a dragon storm may fire a blast of combined energy at a single target, by succeeding at a melee touch attack. If the attack hits, the creature suffers the full

DENIZENS OF THE LAND

effects of the dragon storm's energy touch. This is a supernatural ability that does not provoke a free action.

Energy Explosion (Su): Three times per day, a dragon storm may explode in a fiery, destructive blast of energy. Every creature and object within 60 feet of the dragon storm when this happens suffers 2d8 points of acid damage, 2d8 points of cold damage, 2d8 points of electrical damage and 2d8 points of fire damage. A successful Reflex save (DC 40, Constitution-based) halves all the damage received. After an energy explosion, the dragon storm is stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Energy Touch (Su): Any creature or object that touches or is successfully touched by a dragon storm suffers 1d8 points of acid damage, 1d8 points of cold damage, 1d8 points of electrical damage and 1d8 points of fire damage, with no saving throw. If a creature makes a melee attack against a dragon storm and misses, it is allowed a Reflex save (DC 40) to avoid the damage; if the attack succeeds, the creature and the weapon it made the attack with (if any) suffer the damage automatically.

Immunities (Su): A dragon storm's energy form makes it immune to most energy attacks, including acid, cold, electrical, fire and sonic damage. Force effects (such as a *magic missile* spell) affect the dragon storm normally. A dragon storm is immune to mind-affecting spells and effects, paralysis, poison and sleep, as well as to any spells and effects with the death descriptor. A dragon storm is not subject to critical hits, death from massive damage or sneak attacks.

Mummy Golem

Large Construct

Hit Dice: 13d10+30 (101 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

AC: 22 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +14 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 22

Base attack/Grapple: +9/+22

Attack: Slam +17 melee (2d8+13 plus mummy rot)

Full attack: Slam +17 melee (2d8+13 plus mummy rot)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Mummy rot, rot dust

Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision, undead traits

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +6

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 14, Cha 1

Skills: —

Feats: —

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always evil (any)

Advancement: 14-26 HD (Large), 27-39 (Huge)

Level adjustment: —

This is a towering humanoid, about 10 feet tall, appearing as a revolting mix of corpse and statue. Its limbs are horribly uneven; all its joints stick out at twisted and unnatural angles. Its desiccated flesh wraps tightly around its bones, covered in rotting bandages in several spots. The creature is adorned with the tattered remains of a burial robe and some tarnished jewellery, which only add to its grotesque aspect.

Mummy golems are an aberration created long ago by deviant factions of the Athan dragon cult; they are built using the severed pieces of mummies for their bodies. Animated by strange rituals, these creatures mindlessly attack anything that stands in their way. All efforts to make them smarter and more susceptible to receive and obey orders failed; worse yet, their creators became extinct millennia ago, along with the secret to create and control them...

COMBAT

Mummy golems attack without fear or strategy, bashing things until they stop moving.

Mummy Rot (Su): The touch of a mummy golem transmits mummy rot as a normal mummy does. Supernatural disease—slam, Fortitude DC 16, incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rot Dust (Ex): Every time a mummy golem suffers physical (bludgeoning crushing, slashing or piercing) damage, it emits a cloud of rotting mummy dust; any creature within 5 feet of the mummy golem at that moment must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 16) or contract mummy rot as above.

Immunity to Magic (Su): A mummy golem is immune to any spell or spell-like effect that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against it, as detailed below.

A *create undead* spell causes the mummy golem to make a Fortitude save (DC equal to 16 + caster's Wisdom modifier) or be immediately destroyed, as its mummy parts come to life only to fall to pieces immediately afterwards. If the save succeeds, the mummy golem becomes affected as per an *insanity* spell.

Fire-based magical effects deal 1 point of damage/spell level to the golem, regardless of their original effects.

CONSTRUCTION

A mummy golem must be built from pieces of mummified humanoid bodies. Assembly requires a minimum of four different mummies, though the more mummy bodies available, the better the end result. The special rites and materials required to assemble and animate these pieces cost a total of 1,800 gp. Assembling the body requires a successful Heal check (DC 18).

CL 15th; Craft Construct, *animate dead*, *contagion*, *create undead*; caster must be at least 15th level; Price 70,000; Cost 36,800 gp + 2,728 XP.

Afterword

The above scraps of data about the local monsters and fauna constitute, sadly, the last published words that Fiall Garnwynn ever wrote. For some obscure reason, the bard stopped writing about monsters and fauna shortly after he began his *Dragon Codex*, which stands unfinished and unpublished – it was omitted from this collection by express request from Lady Earie Essaen at the Essaen Estate (forest of Waldionindale). In fact, after the first chapter of the *Dragon Codex* Fiall Garnwynn virtually stopped writing forever, except for a few increasingly detached and sparse notes and his memorable swansong, *A Goodbye*, published a mere two years before his death. Rumours persist about a terrible event or realisation encountered while he was exploring Moru Country; we shall never know. The only undeniable truth is the genius stopped his work, leaving us with no message or vindication but what he had already given to the world. May the gods rest Fiall Garnwynn's soul, and may this humble compilation of his work serve as a worthy capstone to his long, mysterious, sad and glorious stay in this world.

*The Royal Researchers of Manderachi, Q.A.B.
Most Holy and Munificent University of
Manderachi, Imperial City,
For King and Realm
In the Present Year of the Gods,
Specific Date Undisclosed
by Request of H.G.G. Lady
Earie of the M.H. Essaen
Estate, to whom we
hold eternal thanks and
admiration.*

ARUM MU EMEM OEM,
ARUM MUME EMEM
MAM



APPENDIX: HEROES OF MOUNT MORU

The following are special rules for creating and using characters that are native or related to the Moru Country. The Moru Country has its own heroes and villains, its explorers and adventurers; Morudhain barbarians and scouts, mountain explorers, archaeologist sages – all of them belonging to the milieu and spirit of the Morudhain Lands.

Morudhain Humans

Humans of Morudhain stock are just like the humans described in the *Player's Handbook*, except they are much more grim and austere. All Morudhain tend towards the lean side, many of them being long-legged. Most have red hair, green eyes and coppery yet fair skin, though variations do exist, particularly from tribe to tribe. The Morudhain could look primitive by medieval standards, though they have full knowledge of 'modern' technologies such as masonry, steel forging and advanced horsemanship; their main drawback in this respect is lack of a written language. More about the Morudhain tribes, their religion, customs and arts can be found on page 41.

MORUDHAIN RACIAL TRAITS

Treat Morudhain characters as normal humans, except for the following:

- No bonus feat at 1st level. The Morudhain are a narrow-minded, traditionalistic race.
- +4 racial bonus on all Survival checks. The Morudhain are naturally accustomed to one of the harshest environments in the world.
- +1 racial bonus on all saves. The Morudhain are wired and prepared for death at all times.
- -2 racial penalty on all Bluff, Diplomacy and Gather Information checks when dealing with non-Morudhain. Morudhain have great difficulty smiling or relaxing, which significantly harms their social relations.
- Illiteracy. All Morudhain begin the game unable to read or write, regardless of their character class.
- Favoured class: Ranger.

New Race: The Dragon-touched

Finally I know what I am. I shall not speak of it. Suffice it to say I lived a life of deceit for more than two centuries, of being what I was not. I could have been a good man, I could have done great deeds. Thus it could have been and yet thus I die, never having achieved what I was fated to do and doomed to the life of a shadow. An aged shadow, dying empty and unused.

–Fiall Garnwynn, *A Goodbye*

The dragontouched are normal humans that, without being half-dragons themselves, display some features of dragon ancestry. These features are not often obvious and most times a dragontouched character can pass as a normal human. In some very rare cases, dragontouched humans display a stronger draconic strain, looking almost like true half-dragons. Most of



APPENDIX HEROES OF MOUNT MORU

the time, however, the dragontouched can fully pass as normal humans; in fact very few of the dragontouched know of their real heritage. Only humans and half-humans can become dragontouched; other races immediately become half-dragons.

Personality: Dragontouched are almost the same as normal humans, except they are perhaps a bit more quiet, a bit sterner and significantly more introspective. Other humans tend to look upon them as weird and even a bit insane. They tend to like things done well, both in themselves and in others; a dragontouched human will not be content until he has created the perfect result in any task he commits himself to. By the same token, they tend to expect the world around them to be of the best quality possible, seeking the finer things in life at all times. As a result, most dragontouched humans become frustrated and prone to depression.

Physical Description: Here the dragontouched are also similar to common humans, except for a few vaguely draconic features – usually slit pupils, longer nails or fangs or a faint scaly texture on certain parts of the skin. These traits rarely manifest before puberty and most are discreet enough so that the dragontouched human can reach maturity and even die without ever realising he is actually dragontouched.

Relations: Due to their uneasy, strange personality and their undeniably greater talent, dragontouched tend to stand out among other humans, which usually means they are the ‘weird ones’ of their respective social circle. As a result, dragontouched are the target of most jokes, complaints, claims, envy and finger pointing for most of their life; when they reach maturity and their usually incredible talents surface, the mocking recedes but the envy increases. Other than this, they can have quite genial personas, despite their otherwise humourless demeanour, and can get along well with most other people, including those of other races.

Alignment: As dragons themselves, dragontouched humans can be of any alignment and display a quite varied moral behaviour. If anything, they tend to be archetypal examples of their own alignment, with good-aligned dragontouched being great champions of noble causes and evil-aligned ones being truly fearsome blackguards.

Dragontouched Lands: As most dragontouched do not even have the knowledge they exist, they of course

have no racial conscience or political organisation. Their ‘lands’ are human lands; that is, everywhere.

Religion: Dragontouched tend to inherit the immortal confidence of their draconic kin, which usually makes them uncomfortable with religion. If a dragontouched practices any worship, he will of course favour human gods, though he will do so leniently and with a certain innate amusement, which is often irritating to other members of the same church.

Language: All dragontouched humans speak Common; they have a natural affinity for Draconic, however, and may learn it much easier than any other human.

Names: Exactly as humans.

Adventurers: For dragontouched humans, adventuring is a task like any other, worthy of the utmost attention and dedication. A dragontouched adventurer will become obsessed with adventuring, with the glory of a heroic saga and the thrill of dangerous exploration. He will focus on his chosen class with the enthusiasm of an addict and the perseverance of a master. As a result, most dragontouched adventurers end up a spectacular success or a legendary tragedy.

DRAGONTouched RACIAL TRAITS

The following traits are in addition to normal human traits, except as otherwise noted.

- Low-light vision. Dragontouched can see particularly well in the dark.
- +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. Dragontouched humans are both attentive and intuitive.
- +2 racial bonus on Bluff and Intimidate checks. Dragontouched humans tend to have the wit and tongue of their draconic kin.
- +2 racial bonus on Will saves. Dragontouched have a fraction of the legendary willpower of true dragons.
- Dragontouched humans gain a +4 racial bonus on any one skill of their choice; this skill represents their personal focus and obsession.
- +1 additional feat upon character creation. This is in addition to the basic feat granted to normal humans, for a total of three starting feats.
- Level Adjustment +1.
- Favoured class: Sorcerer. This replaces a normal human’s favoured class.

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RUINS OF THE DRAGON LORD

TALES OF MOUNT MORD



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RUINS OF THE DRAGON LORD

TALES OF MOUNT MORD

J C ALVAREZ

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A MOUNTAIN OF STORIES

Old Smoke-Man slowly brought his open hand to the bonfire and impassively left it there, allowing the flames to dance around the deep wrinkles and creases of his fingers. For a long time he did not move his hand, red palm spread, coarse fingers reaching out, as if allowing the flames to set in – no, testing; he was testing the heat of the bonfire – as the sparks flickered in his dull eyes. Presently Old Smoke-Man pulled his hand back and put it to his leather pouch. He took out a long-stem wooden pipe, as dark and creased as his own hand. He quickly touched the bonfire again with his other hand, as if making sure of something; then he brought the pipe to the flames, slowly twisting the bowl until it was upturned above the bonfire. He took his dry, wrinkled lips to the pipe's own lip – as if playing some strange wind instrument – and softly blew on it. Smoke began pouring out of the pipe, not the slight discreet puffs of a normal smoking pipe but a veritable cloud of white fog. I was quite startled by the sudden burst of smoke and I must have leaped up involuntarily, for he looked at me with a funny expression as he motioned me to calm down. Then Old Smoke sat back, withdrew the pipe from the bonfire and took it to his lips, inhaling that dreadful storm of fog he had created and allowing the mist to surround him completely until he was little more than a shadow inside his own cloud of smoke. 'So this is why they call you...' I pondered. Then he started talking.

The book you hold in your hands is a transcription, as best as I could make it from memory, of what Old Smoke-Man said next.

–Edmond Fianna, Heart of the Moru Country

The Three Books

Tales of Mount Moru is just one of the three books written about the Morudhain Lands, the other two being *The Path of Archaneroth* and *The Dragon Stone*. This book in particular contains a number of traditional folktales and more recent modern rumours, all of them stories about the Mountain and the horrors that live inside it. Despite the veritable wealth of detailed information contained in these pages, those who wish to understand and, in turn, tell the tales found on this book should make sure to read the other two grimoires as well; many of the *Tales of Mount Moru* require additional background information contained only in the other two books. Thus the reader will find several references such as 'see *The Path of Archaneroth* for more information' or 'additional details can be found in *The Dragon Stone*'. Therefore, would-be raconteurs of Mount Moru tales are well advised to keep a copy of all three books at hand at all times.

The Adventure

The adventure included in this book, called **The Blood of Dragons**, is intended for a medieval fantasy roleplaying game. To run it, the Games Master needs a copy of the *Player's Handbook*, the *DMG* and the *MM*, as well as the two other books contained in the *Ruins of the Dragon Lord* Boxed Set (*The Path of Archaneroth* and *The Dragon Stone*) by Mongoose Publishing.

This adventure is a self-contained dungeon campaign, intended to take Player Characters from levels 1 to 20. Countless side quests and campaign seeds can spring from it, as Mount Moru has uncounted denizens and histories waiting to be discovered among its dark warrens. Each of the chapters of this mega-adventure may be played in order, as part of the campaign, or separately as a single adventure. To this effect, the beginning of each chapter has a **Chapter Guide** sidebar, indicating the character levels the chapter is meant for and containing an optional introduction intended for Player Characters that join the adventure at that moment. See the **Expected Character Level Table** on page 3 for a more detailed listing of adventure chapters and the character levels they correspond to.

OPTIONAL: THE PRE-MADE PARTY

There are four Non Player Characters in this adventure that were specifically created to replace Player Characters. They are:

- Api** (male 1st level Gnome Rogue)
- Aurelia** (female 1st level Human Wizard)
- Cormac Drake** (male 1st level Human Ranger)
- Rann** (male 1st level Human Cleric)

These Non Player Characters can all be encountered during the introductory chapter (**The Road Begins**); their full story and statistics are in the **Appendix**. They may be used to fill the place of missing party members in case the group has fewer than four players, or as added muscle to a full party. In any case they all appear as Non Player Characters during the adventure so the Player Characters will encounter them one way or the other, though whether to admit them in the party or not is entirely their decision. If the players wish, they may even use them as Player Characters; they were designed to be a balanced party, with built-in motivations to enter the adventure. How and if these characters will be used is, of course, left to the Games Master's discretion.

THE BLOOD OF DRAGONS

The Blood of Dragons runs within me. I should have known earlier; in fact I feel I always knew. Now I shall claim my heritage...

The Blood of Dragons is a dungeon campaign for a medieval fantasy roleplaying game, intended to take four characters from 1st to 20th level. This is a fairly large-scale adventure; its chapters can be played as part of the saga or run independently as separate adventures.

Before running this adventure, it is recommended – though not required – the Games Master familiarises himself with the history of the Morudhain tribes and the Ancient Athan Empire, as recounted in Chapter One of *The Dragon Stone*.

Also, the adventure takes place almost entirely inside the dungeon levels and rooms described in *The Path of Archaneroth*, so the Games Master should keep a copy of this book handy at all times while running **The Blood of Dragons**.

The Chapters

The Blood of Dragons is divided into seven chapters. Each of these chapters is divided in narrative sections intended to lead the Games Master through the events in the adventure, including indications of the conditions required for a chapter to start or end. As an added bonus, each chapter in **The Blood of Dragons** is intended to be playable as a separate adventure, independent from the main storyline; to this effect, each chapter has a corresponding **Chapter Guide** sidebar, which has guidelines on how to adapt the specific chapter to play as a separate scenario. Each of these **Chapter Guides** also indicates the expected character level the chapter is intended for, plus a series of potential character hooks to introduce the players directly to the chapter as a standalone adventure.

The Blood of Dragons is made of the following chapters:

- **Introduction: Old Smoke-Man's Tales**
- **Prologue: The Road Begins**
- **Chapter One: The Goblin God**
- **Chapter Two: Earth and Water**
- **Chapter Three: Hearts of Flame**
- **Chapter Four: Lost Path**
- **Chapter Five: Frost and Fire**
- **Chapter Six: The Queen of Dwergard**
- **Chapter Seven: The Curse of Archaneroth**

TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

Oh, there is another thing – a last chapter. A *secret* chapter. It is very well hidden, which means not all Player Characters will be able to find or play it. Quite enough about that.

EXPECTED CHARACTER LEVEL

Each **Chapter Guide** sidebar indicates the levels at which Player Characters should enter the adventure. The following is a summary of the expected character level for each of the adventure chapters; the character level indicated in the table is also the character level that the Player Characters should reach upon finishing the previous chapter.

EXPECTED CHARACTER LEVEL

Chapter	Expected Character Level
The Road Begins	1 st -2 nd
Chapter One: The Goblin God	1 st -2 nd
Chapter Two: Earth and Water	4 th -5 th
Chapter Three: Hearts of Flame	6 th
Chapter Four: Lost Path	7 th
Chapter Five: Frost and Fire	10 th -11 th
Chapter Six: The Queen of Dwergard	13 th -14 th
Chapter Seven: The Curse of Archaneroth	15 th -16 th

OLD SMOKE-MAN'S TALES

Aedhaine's Dream

It all began with a dream.

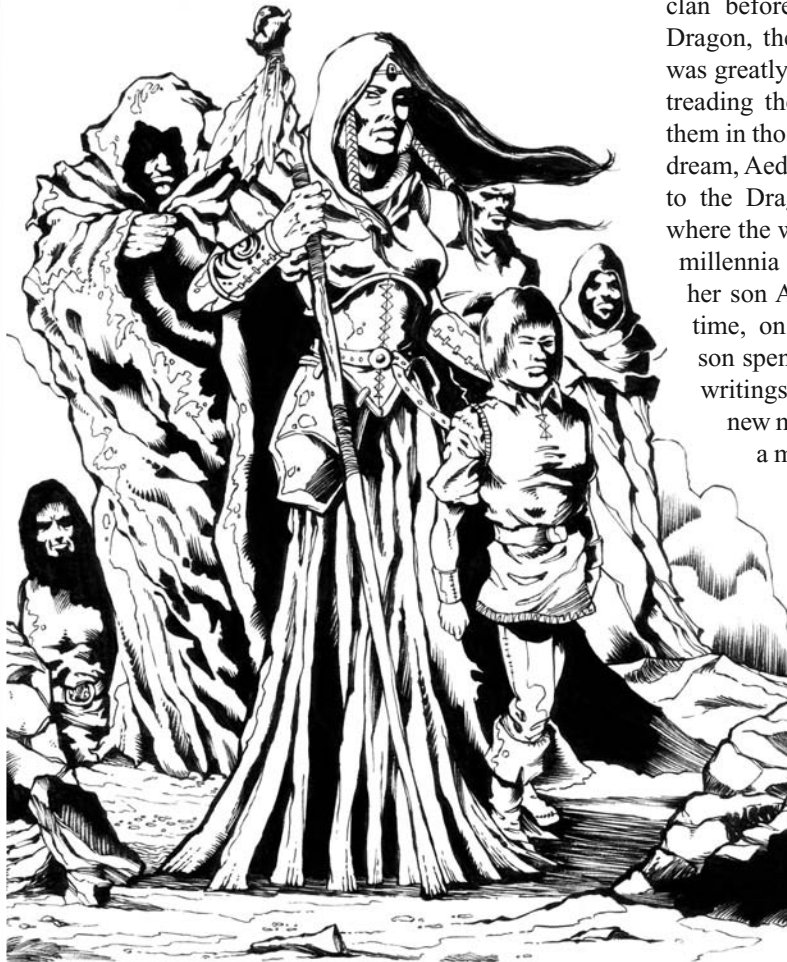
Not long ago, there was a great matriarch in the Dragon Stone Clan, leader of three different tribes and sister to all the great Morudhain chiefs of the Dragon Stone Cairns. Her name was Aedhaine and she was regarded as a mother by hundreds of our kin, even though she had many children of her own. For Aedhaine had the gift of vision – the spirits of our people talked to her through her dreams, giving her advice and warnings that she then imparted to her children. As fortune would have it, it would be one of these dreams that would mean Aedhaine's downfall – and that of all those that followed her.

Aedhaine had nine natural children from her retinue of five husbands. Her second son was called Aogarn, which means *born of unknown father* in

the tongue of dragons. About the kid's father there indeed are no tales; he resembled none of Aedhaine's husbands, plus there was an unnatural quality about him, such that people said his father was no mortal man but one of the spirits that haunted Aedhaine's dreams.

THE DREAM AND THE MESSAGE

Nearly a score winters ago, Aedhaine had a very vivid nightmare about the great dragons of old, the ancient wyrms her people revered thousands of years ago before they turned towards gods. These dragons were not mere deities to be worshipped and prayed to but something far more solid and terrifying, for they lived in the same world and breathed the same air as the primitive Morudhain of past millennia. One day the dragons disappeared and men were left alone to create gods as a pale replacement of the great wyrms' presence; at least, that was the message of Aedhaine's dream. The matriarch, as the whole Dragon Stone clan before her, had grown worshipping the Old Dragon, the Morudhain's wyrm-god; therefore, she was greatly impressed by the image of great dragons treading the earth, with mortals paying homage to them in those millennia of primal darkness. After her dream, Aedhaine began to make frequent pilgrimages to the Dragon Stone, her clan's sacred sanctuary, where the words of the Old Dragon had been written millennia ago. For some reason, she always took her son Aogarn, who counted nine winters at that time, on these pilgrimages. There, mother and son spent hours or even days on end studying the writings on the monolith and discovering a whole new meaning to it – the Dragon Stone poem was a message, calling the Morudhain to worship the dragons again. When she thought she had understood the dream and the hidden message, Aedhaine copied down the poem in a smaller stone tablet, took it with her and established it as the new credo of her tribe. This was in fact the start of a new religion, split from the main worship of the Dragon Stone Clan; after a few months, nearly half the Dragon Stone Clan had joined Aedhaine's faith.



THE PILGRIMAGE

Once Aedhaine's followers numbered in the thousands, she revealed the message of the stone – the spirit of the Old Dragon still lived inside Mount Moru and his followers had to live closer to him; they had to return to the dark vault of his love. After the great revelation, Aedhaine left everything behind, including her five husbands and all of her children – except for Aogarn, who had no father to be left with – and established herself as leader of a new clan, which she called the Moru Tribe. After it was formed, Aedhaine led the entire tribe on a great pilgrimage to Mount Moru, the 'Mountain of Terror' in your tongue, to repopulate it as their ancestors had attempted centuries before. More than 2,000 Morudhain followed Aedhaine inside the Mount, disregarding the ancient superstitions regarding it as a cursed place. The Moru Tribe successfully settled on the upper mountain levels and prospered there for a few decades, building underground farms and even a working silver mine near the mount entrance. Two winters past, however, the dream assaulted Aedhaine again and she was compelled to seek the Old Dragon in the depths of the mountain, to which her entire tribe followed her once more. Here ends what knowledge mortal men may have about Aedhaine and her Moru Tribe...

The Tale of the Dragon Lord

Hundreds of years after the Morudhain's primitive ancestors worshipped the first dragons of the earth, the Athans came to live in Mount Moru. They were already an ancient race when they arrived; nobody knows where they came from or whether they were of Morudhain or foreign stock. What is known is they took Mount Moru for their own and founded a great civilisation there. The Athan Empire lasted for many centuries, until it fell because of a great offence against the Gods: The Athans paid homage to a dark deity, very similar to the primitive dragons we worshipped and feared in the world's beginning; they called it the Dragon Lord and for them it represented death. The spirits tell the other gods became offended against this monstrous deity and destroyed Archaneroth, the capital city of the Athan Empire. After the fall of its capital city, the entire Athan civilisation was devastated as well. In the thousands of years that have passed since, countless explorers, settlers and adventurers, including whole tribes of our own people, have entered Mount Moru, looking for the ruins of the Athan Empire – they never returned. This was the curse of the Dragon Lord.

The Secret of Aogarn

The following information should not be readily available within the adventure; it is presented here as story background for the Games Master only.

ANOTHER DRAGON GOD

During her people's early occupation of Mount Moru, Aedhaine was content with her new clan and their adopted faith; however, her strange dreams kept urging her forward, calling her deeper into Mount Moru. At the same time, Aogarn had become older and wiser; he studied the Dragon Stone on his own, reaching his own conclusions and exploring the catacombs beneath Mount Moru by himself. There he sought traces of the fabled Athans, the ancient civilisation that enslaved his people millennia ago and had long since disappeared beneath the mountain. To his surprise, Aogarn did find Athan ruins inside the mountains; he made increasingly long solitary expeditions to these ruins, where he was further surprised to find texts and legends about the Old Dragon he had been taught to worship – it was one and the same with the ancient god of the Athans itself. Aogarn did not realise both religions were fundamentally different, even if they revered the same Dragon Lord as he believed; instead, he assumed his mother had interpreted the dreams incorrectly. Aogarn adopted the worship of the Athans' Dragon Lord for himself and kept practicing it in secret, while outwardly he still followed his tribe's faith. Every day he would ask the Old Dragon for wisdom and guidance in the name of the Moru Tribe; the next day, however, he would leave for the Athan ruins in search of the knowledge and secrets of the Athans' Dragon Lord of Death. More important, Aogarn read about the city of Archaneroth, the lost capital of the Athans. He had always been taught the ancient city had been destroyed along with the Athan Empire in a great cataclysm thousands of years ago; however, his new sources of information hinted that Archaneroth was still buried somewhere below the mountain, inhabited by immortal spirits, full of arcane secrets and power. Even more importantly, he uncovered Athan sacred texts that told the Dragon Lord still slept in Archaneroth, waiting for a mortal to awaken him...

As Aogarn became a man, he slowly gained ascendancy over his mother, subtly influencing her thoughts and actions through the emotional link they had always shared. Finally, he convinced Aedhaine of leading the tribe deeper into Mount Moru, to seek the fabled city of Archaneroth. Ready to die for Aedhaine, her tribe followed her and Aogarn into the bowels of the earth.

OLD SMOKE MAN'S TALES

AOGARN THE WIZARD

As the Moru Tribe progressed into the mountain, they discovered more and more Athan ruins, where Aogarn and Aedhaine discovered more and more secrets about the Dragon Lord. During this time, Aogarn became increasingly obsessed with arcane power; his lust for learning matched only by his escalating might, his advance through the dark arts mirrored by his descent into the depths of the mountain. Within one year, Aogarn had gathered a small cult of followers within the Moru Tribe; he called them the Dragon Guards and imparted a fraction of his power upon them, even helping them forge special armour and weapons to distinguish themselves from the other tribe members. Most of their kin regarded this as harmless eccentricity, though some others were very worried about this new sect of armoured youths.

FALL OF THE MORU TRIBE

The more Aedhaine's Clan descended into the darkness, the further away they were from fertile ground, sunlight, acceptable living conditions or even breathing space. Members of the tribe deserted Aedhaine daily, sometimes several dozens at a time, to try and return to the surface; most of them did not even make it back outside the mountain, slain by hunger, fatigue or the unnamed horrors of the Moru tunnels. Those that kept going had to fight the same difficulties; the dark underground spirits of Mount

Moru hounded and stalked the wearying Morudhain at every turn. However, none of these factors seemed to matter to Aogarn, who wished only to push forward and find Archaneroth to uncover its secrets.

It came to pass the Moru Tribe reached the base of Mount Moru, where they had the option to push on downward or make their way out back to the Morudhain lands now they had reached ground level. More than half the tribe wished to leave Aedhaine and return to the surface; they had endured enough crossing the mountain to this point but going any deeper than the base of Mount Moru itself seemed too much for them. Aogarn insulted and cursed these 'traitors', as he called them, which resulted in a bloody battle between brothers. It was the first internal conflict in more than ten years of existence of the Moru Tribe and was all the more devastating because it came totally unexpectedly. However, even more unexpected was what happened next – neither side suspected the dark forgotten spirits of Mount Moru, which had been pursuing the tribe since their descent began, would finally catch up with them during their fratricide skirmish. The entire Moru Tribe was slaughtered then and there, those that wanted to continue below the mountain and those who were ready to return home; even Aedhaine fell in that place, defending her tribe's honour and life with her last breath. The only survivors were Aogarn, who



carried his mother's Dragon Stone, and his Dragon Guards, who abandoned the other Morudhain to their doom at the hands of the Moru spirits. They all pressed on to the dark depths below the mountain, seeking ancient Archaneroth through a trail of blood and the dark depths of treachery...

THE RETURN OF THE DRAGON LORD

Unknown to Aogarn and everyone else, the Dragon Lord he sought was not a god but a mortal man, a very cruel and tyrannical ruler of ancient Atha, who had made his own people revere him as a god. His name was Amaros; he was the god-king of Archaneroth when the curse of the Gods fell upon the city and destroyed the Athan Empire. Before his city was destroyed, Amaros took precautions and buried himself alive in a sealed mausoleum, where he enacted a dreadful rite of death and dark magic. There, in that tomb of his own making, Amaros fell into a sleep of undeath, from which he would one day wake to rule Mount Moru as a lich king. Thus he slept unmolested through the divine cataclysm that levelled his city; thus he was unaffected by the fall of the Athan Empire. Amaros still lies within the ruins of Archaneroth; from his sleepless rest, he *knows* Aogarn is coming to find the city.

Now, when the gods destroyed Archaneroth, they left a great curse upon the mountain, which prevented the great powers of Archaneroth from escaping their underground prison. This curse, called the Travelling Seal, was a great spell of godly proportions that prevented all magical travel into and out of the Mount Moru underground. This seal also prevents the Dragon Lord from coming out of his prison; therefore, he wants Aogarn to find Archaneroth and break the seal. He wants the young wizard to unearth his tomb, free him and allow him to walk the world of the living again, wielding such power nobody will be able to stand in his way this time – not even the gods themselves.

Recent Events

The following information should not be readily available within the adventure; it is presented here as story background for the Games Master only.

THE UNICORN'S VISION

The human cultures to the south of the Moru Country, much younger than both the Athan and Morudhain peoples, worship Iri of the Blessed Horn, an ancient and foreign unicorn god of knowledge and truth.

Many centuries ago, the forebears of the Church of Iri gave the Athans a sacred relic – a replica of a unicorn horn – as a gesture of peace; this relic was lost during the fall of Archaneroth and buried with the Athan civilisation deep below Mount Moru. Now, many centuries later, only the descendants of those first priests of Iri remember the lost relic they had given to the fallen civilisation.

Recently, the first reports about the disappearance of Aedhaine's Moru Tribe arrived to Meadowvale and to the current Church of Iri. The high priest Deovain of the Blessed Horn, head of this church, concluded that the 'lost' tribe had not disappeared but surely went deeper inside Mount Moru, searching for the relics of the Athan civilisation. Now, Deovain fears for his church's lost relic and for the possibility of the dragon-worshippers finding it by chance – it would be a great sacrilege for the horn to be found by followers of the Old Dragon, the unicorn's mortal enemy. Therefore, high priest Deovain decided to organise another Mount Moru expedition in the name of his Church, intent on finding the relic before the Morudhain do.

A GATHERING OF DRAGONS

In the past few decades, there has been a dramatic increase in the sightings of dragons and draconic creatures in the vicinity of Mount Moru. Nobody is sure why – most local folk have not even noticed it – yet there *is* a power mounting in Mount Moru; a dark presence awakening, a subtle call that attracts draconic kin to the Moru Country.

The Brood of the Old Dragon

The draconic call is not limited to summoning dragons to Mount Moru; it has also manifested in stealthier ways, through time and blood. There has been an unprecedented boom of children with draconic features, born of all animal, humanoid and giant species everywhere in the Moru Country. Some of these 'dragontouched' children have also felt the call of Mount Moru; the strongest of them have even settled inside the mount, establishing their home there with varying degrees of success. As a result, at least five important half-dragon leaders have appeared and are currently active inside the Mountain. These are the strongest of their generation but they are not the only ones by any means – hundreds of half-dragons or 'dragontouched' men and women can be found in Mount Moru nowadays – what consequences will this have in the near or far future, nobody knows.

THE ROAD BEGINS

Ahead? Ahead lies horror...

The Player Characters enter the scene almost two years after the Moru Tribe abandoned their settlements inside Mount Moru to go deeper inside the mountain; they have relatively little time before Aogarn finds the Dragon Lord and frees him from his prison.

Chapter Sections

The adventure starts at the city of Meadowvale, detailed in page 7 of *The Dragon Stone*. From here, the Player Characters have the free run of the Morudhain Lands, which means they may visit any place they like before actually entering the Mount Moru dungeon. The following sections feature the many geographical and narrative points the Player Characters may stop at before entering the dungeon, listed in the order the Player Characters are more likely to visit them, if at all; although the adventure is assumed to start at Meadowvale, the Games Master may use any of these sections as a starting point, making the appropriate alterations to the story. These adventure introduction sections include the following:

Meadowvale: Here the Player Characters may gather rumours and facts about recent events, most specifically the disappearance of Aedhaine's tribe and the call for volunteers from the Last Shrine of Iri. Also, some of the Meadowvale Non-Player Characters are willing to join an adventuring team; these Non-Player Characters may benefit underpopulated parties, or even be run as Player Characters themselves.

The Last Shrine: If the Player Characters decide to visit the Temple of Iri of the Blessed Horn, they may join the Moru expedition organised by High Priest Deovain.

Moru Road: On the trip north to Mount Moru, the Player Characters may have their first violent encounters against the goblins and other creatures that prowl the roads.

The Morudhain Lands: In the Morudhain territories, the Player Characters can find additional information about Aedhaine and her clan – provided the Morudhain are willing to speak about it, which is unlikely but worth a try.

Stonehold: If the Player Characters visit the dwarf fortress to the east of Mount Moru, they may receive the mission to help the dwarves against the goblin Stormcloud army.

The Moru Path: Before entering the dungeon and starting the adventure proper, the Player Characters must climb Mount Moru, which requires hours of hazardous ascent, regardless of whether they take the main route or decide to seek an alternative entrance into Mount Moru.

The Entrance Caves: This small section is only the preamble to the true beginning of the adventure – the entrance to the Mount Moru dungeon.

Meadowvale

The pale flames at the fireplace dance as fading white ghosts, their light and heat barely needed or noticeable in this temperate summer evening. The atmosphere is dry and empty, as there are very few patrons at the inn; however, their chatter is enough to give the place the feel of a crowded hall. These days, it seems everybody is talking about some thing or another in Meadowvale...

The Blood of Dragons assumes the Player Characters start out at the Old Stone Inn in Meadowvale, where they have arrived looking for information or adventure. There, they are likely to learn about the several rumours circulating around the town – and the great adventures waiting behind those rumours. Additional information about the Old Stone Inn is given in page 7 of *The Dragon Stone*.

THE PARTY

The night the adventure begins, there is a small gathering at the inn; six or seven patrons of all races and classes, including Seallan the town minstrel (male human 1st level bard; see the 'NPC Statistics' section in Chapter Four of the *DMG*), are affably swapping good-natured jokes, tales and gossip. Leah, the owner of the inn, walks around dispensing drinks, laughing at the jokes, sitting on the laps of the most audacious customers and adding her voice to a couple of song choruses here and there.

Chapter Guide: The Road Begins

This introductory chapter to the adventure has very few encounters but can take quite some game time as the Player Characters introduce themselves to the adventure and get on their way to Mount Moru. If any of the following chapters are to be played as separate scenarios, **The Road Begins** may be used as an introductory chapter for that separate scenario as well.

Expected Character Level: At this point, Player Characters should be 1st or 2nd level. Higher-level characters should enter the adventure at a later point, as indicated in the **Chapter Guide** sidebar of each of the following chapters. Optionally, Player Characters may start their adventure in Meadowvale regardless of their experience and then proceed to the section of the adventure corresponding to their character level (see **Expected Character Levels** table on page 3).

CHARACTER HOOKS

If the Games Master lacks a good adventure hook to introduce the Player Characters into the story, he may use one of the sample hooks from the following list, preferably the one that most resembles the party's goals and motivations. After the Player Characters have been properly introduced to the adventure, proceed to **Scene I**.

- The Player Characters have just arrived to the Morudhain Lands from somewhere else, in search of adventure; perhaps they wish to know firsthand the legendary perils of Mount Moru; perhaps they have heard about the goodwill towards adventurers Meadowvale is famed for. In any event, their obvious first stop is Meadowvale, where they hear all kinds of rumours about the area, including the stories about Aedhaine's lost tribe and the new expedition organised by the Church of Iri.
- The Player Characters are native to Meadowvale or the surrounding lands; they have become interested in the ever-increasing reports about strange events near Mount Moru, be it the sudden increase of goblin and orc sightings, the call for volunteers from the Temple of Iri or the gossip about the disappearance of Aedhaine's Tribe. It is time someone investigated all this...
- At least one of the Player Characters is a Morudhain (see page 41 in *The Dragon Stone* about creating characters of the Morudhain race), who has been asked by his elders to investigate the fate of the disappeared Dragon Stone Clan. However, since members of Aedhaine's clan were outcasts, they had virtually no contact with other Morudhain tribes, performing most of their trade with the civilised humans of Meadowvale. Therefore the Player Characters were sent to Meadowvale – a quite unusual move for the reclusive Morudhain – to investigate the stories about Aedhaine's disappearance before returning north to enter Mount Moru...

Leah: Female 2nd level human commoner; hp 8; AL N; see 'NPC Classes' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Lianne and Baressa (barmaids): Female 1st level human commoner; hp 4 each; see 'NPC Classes' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Luannah (Cook): Female 1st level half-elf commoner; hp 2; see 'NPC Classes' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Old Jobe (Butler): Male 1st level human commoner; hp 3; see 'NPC Classes' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Vitley (Page): Male 1st level human commoner; hp 2; see 'NPC Classes' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Gillaume, Gall and Lubber (stable hands): Male 1st level human commoner; hp 3 each; see 'NPC Classes' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Seallan: Male 2nd level human bard; hp 11; AL NG; otherwise see 'NPC Statistics' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Other Patrons: 1st level commoners (6); hp 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 5; see 'NPC Classes' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

The party is an excellent opportunity to investigate the rumours about the recent happenings in Mount Moru or, at least, to get a good night's fun.

THE ROAD BEGINS

THE RUMOURS

As soon as the Player Characters ask about, or reveal an interest in, recent happenings in the area, allow them a Gather Information check and consult the Meadowvale Rumours table (below). The Player Characters learn the fact corresponding to their Gather Information check result, plus all the facts corresponding to lower check results.

Note: If the **Meadowvale Rumours** table is used after Chapter One, the rumours change – see page 30 for details.

In addition to information on current events, the Player Characters might ask about the history, geography or people of the Morudhain Lands. In this case, the Games Master should take information directly from Chapters One to Three of *The Dragon Stone*, revealing scattered facts about the specific subject the Player Characters asked about.

Seallan, the minstrel of Meadowvale, is the most knowledgeable character in the Old Stone Inn at the moment – not only does he know all the facts listed on the **Meadowvale Rumours** table; he also knows, alone among all Meadowvale citizens, the full story of Aedhaine and her clan up to their disappearance last year. This information equals the full story contained in the **Aedhaine's Dream** section at the beginning of the adventure (page 4). Of course, getting Seallan to share this information should not be all that easy – the Games Master should at least require Player Characters to succeed at a couple of Diplomacy checks against Seallan before he tells everything he knows.

MEADOWVALE RUMOURS TABLE

Check result	Information obtained
5 or higher	The priests over at the Last Shrine are looking for volunteers for a dangerous assignment. Something related to Mount Moru, it seems...
10 or higher	Goblins and orcs have been multiplying near the mountain lately – nothing good can come out of that...
15 or higher	Them dwarves at the Stonehold fortress are looking for hired hands... must be delicate business if they would descend to dealing with us humans, ay?
20 or higher	A whole Morudhain tribe disappeared inside Mount Moru more than a year ago... the priests at the Last Shrine have more information. Then again, you can go ask the Morudhain themselves but do not count on them telling, heh...
25 or higher	Oh, yes, the Morudhain tribe that disappeared inside Mount Moru. Worshippers of dragons, of dragons carved in stones I think; the Dragon Stone Clan indeed. Their leader was called Edhaine or something like that – a true matriarch by all accounts; invented a new religion and everything...

Beyond the Inn: Exploring Meadowvale

Player Characters should be allowed to move around the town as they will, asking information when they feel like it and going on the adventure as soon as they feel ready; the whole of Meadowvale, with its establishments and Non-Player Characters, is available for Player Characters to explore at their leisure, even buying equipment or staying a few days at the inn if they need. In addition, these extra days at Meadowvale may help Player Characters round up any facts they might have missed from the **Meadowvale Rumours** table. The town of Meadowvale is described in page 9 of *The Dragon Stone*. There is no keyed map to Meadowvale, as the main adventure should take place almost entirely inside Mount Moru; however, some specific areas and characters in the village are worthy of a closer look:

THE RIVER ROSE

Should the Player Characters wish to meet River Rose, the unofficial matriarch of Meadowvale, it is quite easy to set up an appointment with her, be it at the Old Stone Inn itself or at her house, a nice two-story cottage in the south-western corner of the village. As a family tradition, River Rose is always glad to receive visitors, particularly foreign adventurers. She is familiar with the recent happenings in the area; she can tell the Player Characters all the facts listed in the **Meadowvale Rumours** table (see page 10) and, if they earn her trust, she can also give them recommendations to get a 10% discount on all equipment and food purchases inside Meadowvale.

THE ROAD BEGINS

River Rose is also the only Meadowvale citizen, besides Seallan the minstrel, who knows the story of the Moru Clan up to their disappearance, as related in the **Aedhaine's Dream** section at the beginning of this adventure (page 4). The statistics of River Rose may be found in page 9 of *The Dragon Stone*.

THE CHURCH OF THE BLESSED HORN

There is a small temple to Iri of the Blessed Horn inside the city, whose priests are directly answerable to the higher-ranking clerics at the Last Shrine. These priests perform normal healing services at the costs listed in Chapter Seven of the *Player's Handbook*. If they encounter capable-looking adventurers, the priests direct them to the Last Shrine northeast of Meadowvale, where High Priest Deovain and his acolytes might have a mission for willing souls (see **The Last Shrine**, below).

Brother Criagh (head of the church): Male 2nd level human cleric; hp 16; AL LG; otherwise see 'NPC Statistics' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Church of the Blessed Horn Priests (2): Male 1st level human cleric; hp 9; AL NG; otherwise see 'NPC Statistics' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Church of the Blessed Horn Keeper (1): Male 1st level human druid; hp 10; AL NG; otherwise see 'NPC Statistics' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

UNCLE TARLOUGH

The closest Meadowvale has to a crime lord is Uncle Tarlough, the local 'man of respect'. Tarlough handles illegal traffic of stolen goods (particularly alchemical items and poisons) and one or two gambling parlours; he uses part of his profits to buy food and needed materials for the Meadowvale people. The Meadowvale ruling council knows of Uncle Tarlough's activities and has agreed to turn a blind eye to it, as long as Uncle Tarlough keeps providing for the common good and refrains from killing people – so far, the Uncle has never gone beyond punishing debtors and offenders by beatings and other exemplary means of retribution. Smart or inquisitive Player Characters should be allowed to find and contact Uncle Tarlough, especially if they have a good business offer for him. The Games Master is encouraged to make locating Tarlough a harder quest, requiring at least a successful Gather Information check (DC 20). Uncle Tarlough lives alone in his

house, a luxurious but unpretentious two-story chalet in the southern section of the village. Although he lives alone, many young Meadowvale girls have been known to frequent his house in exchange for little gifts. Uncle Tarlough leaves all his dirty jobs to his two trusted bodyguards and agents, the Orrigan brothers.

Uncle Tarlough: Male 3rd level human rogue; hp 16; AL LN; otherwise see 'NPC Statistics' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

The Orrigan Brothers (2): Male 1st level human rogue; hp 8 each; AL N; otherwise see 'NPC Statistics' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

PARTY NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Each of the following Non-Player Characters, all of which can be found in Meadowvale, would be willing to accompany an adventuring party to Mount Moru for different reasons. These Non-Player Characters may help boost the strength of a character party, or the Games Master may even allow them as Player Characters.

Api: This gnome is looking for someone to go with him to Mount Moru. He likes the idea of adventure and loot, though he fears undertaking the trip alone. If he can find a party willing to take him, he would gladly tag along to the 'thrills and riches' he is sure to find in Mount Moru. Full information about Api, including his game statistics, can be found in the **Appendix**.

Aurelia: The young wizard Aurelia, daughter of the legendary sage and explorer Andwar Bacchi, is looking to hire an adventuring party to accompany her to Mount Moru in search of her father, who was lost somewhere inside the Mount. Even if her job offer is not accepted, she at least tries to join any party that intends to explore Mount Moru. Aurelia's magical expertise may provide an extra arm to the party, while her personal quest could mean an additional adventure hook to involve the Player Characters. Aurelia's full story and statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

Cormac Drake: This is the stereotypical antisocial hunter of Meadowvale; he lives off animal trapping and skinning in a cabin at the northwest outskirts of town. Recently, Cormac decided to travel to Mount Moru for personal reasons; if he learns about anybody

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else making plans about a Mount Moru expedition, he might tag along if the party earns his trust. Otherwise, he is likely to follow them, at least to keep them watched. The **Appendix** has detailed information about Cormac's statistics, history, personality and motivations.

FROM HERE

As soon as the Player Characters move on from Meadowvale, precede to **The Last Shrine**, **The Morudhain Lands** or **Moru Road**, depending on the direction the Player Characters want to take.

The Last Shrine

After following the road up the peak for about an hour, you reach a serene mesa, with nothing disturbing the scenery except for a gentle wind that rustles the bushes and the dust on the road. From here, you can clearly see the vast expanse of the Morudhain Lands stretching northward, a silent grey sea of desolation; it seems like a far away, almost dreamlike dominion, crowned by the shadowy shape of Mount Moru in the distance. Overlooking this landscape, up on a ridge at the mesa border a few feet from here, there is a simple building of white stone. It has a walled-out garden on the back and a large, if modest, entrance courtyard. The frontispiece is adorned with various symbols representing the spiralled horn of a unicorn. Some robed men work or walk on the courtyard; a couple of them look at you calmly as you finish your climb.

The Temple of Iri of the Blessed Horn is the last civilised spot to visit before entering the merciless Moru Country; that is why it is called The Last Shrine. The temple itself overlooks a ridge from which the entire Morudhain Lands can be seen by anyone looking north. The Temple priests provide healing, spellcasting and ceremonial services to any traveller, at the standard price. They also sell equipment, mostly religious items such as holy water and symbols but also basic travelling gear such as backpacks and rope. Finally, the priests offer free advice to anyone travelling towards the Moru Country – they do not know for sure what lies inside Mount Moru, though they can warn travellers about the typical dangers of the wilderness and the best way to deal with the Morudhain.

The Expedition

If the Player Characters mention the rumour about the Church of Iri calling on volunteers for an expedition, they are taken to high priest Deovain inside the Temple.

HIGH PRIEST DEOVAIN

The high priest receives the Player Characters in his sanctum, a humble study with bare white walls and plain wooden furniture. As long as the Player Characters behave civilly, he is the nicest of hosts. A full description of high priest Deovain can be found in page 10 of *The Dragon Stone*.

The priest looks good-natured but tired; he does not like leadership, plus all the hustle and bustle about the Morudhain tribe's disappearance has been an unusual disturbance in his slow and peaceful lifestyle. He wants to organise the expedition to Mount Moru at once and be done with it. Sadly, he has found no volunteers for it, except for one of his youngest clerics (see **Rann**, below); if a decent-looking party offers to undertake the expedition, he jumps at the chance. Note Deovain has a reasonably high Sense Motive bonus and he has memorised *detect evil*, *discern lies* and *zone of truth*; therefore, what is 'decent-looking' for Deovain is surely decent enough to be trusted with the quest. Deovain will not assign the mission



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to characters he deems to be evil or treacherous, though he will not deny them any help, equipment or advice.

BACKGROUND: LEGEND OF THE UNICORN HORN
Deovain tells the Player Characters what he knows about the unicorn's horn – that many centuries ago, members of the church of Iri used to deal and trade with the dragon-worshippers of the Athan Empire, despite the vast religious differences of both cultures; as a final gesture of peace, the church of Iri gave the Athans one of their sacred relics – the real horn of a unicorn, symbolising the power of their god. Nobody knows what happened to the relic, much less after the Athan civilisation disappeared. Deovain also tells the tale of the Moru Tribe's disappearance as he knows it (everything contained in the **Aedhaine's Dream** section in page 4) and confesses he is worried about the dragon-worshipping Morudhain finding it first. He will also be upfront about the fact the Morudhain have probably been exploring Mount Moru for more than a year now, which may mean the Player Characters will have to obtain the relic *from* the Morudhain rather than *before* them.

THE MISSION

Any character party that receives the mission from Deovain is officially considered the Moru expeditionary party, directly commanded and auspicated by the Temple of Iri of the Blessed Horn, with the mission of entering Mount Moru, finding the unicorn's horn and taking it back to Deovain at the Temple. The Moru expeditionary party receives a 1,000 gp advance to share among its members, plus each character in the party receives trail rations for 21 days if he can carry them. The party may also receive additional mundane items, such as backpacks or rope, if they ask for it and are not too greedy about it. Deovain also promises a final payment of 10,000 gold pieces upon delivery of the relic; if this is not enough for the Player Characters, have Deovain talk to them about the treasures still waiting to be found inside Mount Moru, which the Player Characters could rightfully claim. Failing that, Deovain is willing to let himself be haggled up to a final price of 20,000 gold pieces but not a copper more.

RANN

So far, young Rann Shieldborne is the only acolyte of the temple to have volunteered for Deovain's Moru expedition quest. He is an acolyte of the lowest level, known for his rash temperament and what his elders

interpret as a lack of wisdom. However, Rann is eager to prove himself worthy of greater tasks; therefore, he will gladly join the Moru expedition if its members will take him. If the Player Characters reject Rann, Deovain understands and allows them to go on by themselves, though the young cleric could be a useful addition to any adventuring party or even be used as a Player Character himself. The full story and statistics of Rann can be found in the **Appendix**.

FROM HERE

From the Last Shrine the Player Characters may return to **Meadowvale** or take **Moru Road**; proceed to the appropriate section according to the Player Characters' decision.

Moru Road

The road to Mount Moru stretches north as far as you can see. It is a windswept, neglected road, closer to a natural trail than a paved thoroughfare. Nothing moves in this dreary grey landscape, except the occasional dust cloud carried by the east wind. Mount Moru, the end of this road, is supposed to be invisible from here; however, you are sure you can discern the shadowy silhouette of the craggy peak, awaiting somewhere over the line of the horizon.

Moru Road runs northward for a bit more than 100 miles before ending at the base of Mount Moru. A standard Player Character party taking this road from Meadowvale should reach the mountain within a week – four days if all party members have a base speed of 30 feet or greater.

ENCOUNTERS IN MORU ROAD

While the Player Characters make the trip through Moru Road, the Games Master should refrain from using the wandering monster tables found in page 5 of *The Path of Archanerth* as the indicated encounters may end up well above the party's level.

Moru Goblin Raiders (EL 1)

Every night the party spends travelling or camping along Moru Road there is a 40% chance they will come upon a band of goblin raiders from the Stormcloud Company. This encounter should not take place more than once during the trip to Mount Moru.

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Goblin Raiders (4, 1st Level Goblin Warriors): hp 5 each; see ‘Goblin’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

These goblins wear the livery of the Stormcloud Company (a dark blue lightning bolt) on their shields and clothing.

Tactics: The goblin raiders attack by sneaking upon passing or camping adventuring parties; when they think the time is right, they attempt to strike their enemies by surprise. They try to avoid open attacks, even against obviously weaker opposition; they also avoid attacking by day.

Development: If the Player Characters successfully take goblin prisoners and interrogate them, the goblins are quite likely to confess everything they know about the gathering of the Stormcloud Company – that they have a ‘great leader’ (Akkal Tor, the goblin general; see page 24) and a ‘mighty god’ that will take their race to greatness; they can also talk about the existence of the Goblin Fortress below the Entrance Caves (see page 20). These goblin soldiers cannot describe the inner structure of the Fortress, as they are permanently stationed outside it; they are also completely ignorant of their Fortress’ Athan origin.

THE WOLF

When the Player Characters are halfway through the journey to Mount Moru, they find a lone wolf, without any pack or mates, leisurely walking by the side of the road. As he sees the Player Characters, he starts to follow them with no apparent reason.

This is no normal wolf but a shapechanged gold dragon called Aurebaor; he is here to investigate some strange events related to Mount Moru.

The Dragon Exodus

During the last half-century, dozens of dragons have been coming to Mount Moru, three or four dragons every year, as if called by a superior force; none of those dragons have returned home. Aurebaor has come of his own volition to investigate these disappearances, convinced the Old Dragon of Mount Moru has something to do with it. For this reason, Aurebaor chose the form of a wolf – he knows the legend of the Old Dragon and Gamageth the Wolf (see page 30 in *The Dragon Stone*), so he realises the symbolic, righteous meaning of adopting a wolf’s shape for this mission. In addition, anonymity helps him investigate without rising suspicion or fear among

humans and, more importantly, without alerting the dark spirits of Mount Moru of his presence.

If he sees any adventuring party heading to Mount Moru, he follows them for a bit, pretending to be a hungry wolf looking for scraps. If, after a few days, they prove to deserve his trust and companionship, he enters the Moru dungeon with them and accompanies them for the rest of the trip, still pretending he is a wolf.

For more details about The Wolf/Aurebaor as a character and companion, see the **Appendix**.

FROM HERE

The Player Characters may continue along Moru Road until the end of the journey, in which case they arrive to **The Moru Path** that goes up the mountain; they may also leave Moru Road early to enter **The Morudhain Lands** or take a northeast detour towards **Stonehold**. Proceed to the corresponding section according to the Player Characters’ decision.

The Morudhain Lands

As you leave behind the roads and houses, the sheer harshness of the land before you overwhelms your senses and instinct, as if you had suddenly entered another world: A world of dismal landscapes and rocky wasteland, of calling winds and unnatural gloom. This country has an ancient, hostile feel to it; you cannot help but feeling like an intruder in a realm of such silent, pristine desolation. For a moment it feels like the land itself is trying to make you feel unwelcome.

The Player Characters may wish to return to the Morudhain territories and gather some additional information before marching into Mount Moru. However, the Morudhain folk will not treat them well unless there are other Morudhain of their same tribe in the party. The large map included in the boxed set indicates the locations of all Morudhain settlements, according to the territory of the tribe they belong to.

The Morudhain Tribes

If a Morudhain settlement is visited by a party not including at least one Morudhain of the same tribe,

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the visitors are received very coldly, with stern gazes and curt answers to all questions. The Morudhain are not openly hostile but they try to make tourists as uncomfortable and bored as they can. It bears noting that most Player Characters should be unaware of the Morudhain's tribal divisions, which is likely to lead them to huge social mistakes sooner or later. Details about the lifestyle and culture of the Morudhain can be found in page 14 of *The Dragon Stone*.

INTERACTION WITH THE MORUDHAIN

A character that does not belong to a specific Morudhain tribe suffers a -10 penalty on all Diplomacy and Gather Information checks made against members of this tribe. In addition, most Morudhain – except for the Dragon Stone clan – know very little about Aedhaine's tribe and their fate; most of them believe Aedhaine's tribe to be heretics and traitors that deserved what they got.

TRADING WITH THE MORUDHAIN

Despite the Morudhain's basic unfriendliness, it is possible to trade with them by succeeding at a few social interaction checks. The Morudhain sell furs, small weapons or jewellery; they have little use for money so they prefer to trade for useful, advanced technology such as alchemical items or metal armour.

THE DRAGON STONE CLAN

Members of the Dragon Stone Clan are particularly concerned about Aedhaine's disappearance; the families of many of them were among those lost when Aedhaine's tribe disappeared last year. As a result, they are much more willing to help anyone that intends to go looking for the lost Morudhain, though that does not make them kind or trusting towards strangers by any means.

THE DRAGON STONE

It is quite likely a party that has bothered to take the detour to Morudhain Lands is going to be interested in visiting the Dragon Stone that caused everything. If the character party includes a member of the Dragon Stone Clan, other members of the tribe escort them there without hesitation; otherwise the Player Characters will have to find their own way to the Dragon Stone. This is a ten foot tall standing stone, carved with Morudhain ritual symbols and surrounded by smaller marked stones. It is ritually forbidden to harm or move these stones, under pain of great punishment from the Dragon Stone Clan. A full description of the monolith and its significance

can be found in page 44 of *The Dragon Stone*. A character wishing to copy the Dragon Stone poem must be able to understand the Morudhain tongue and then succeed at a Decipher Script check (DC 15) to make sense of the worn-out carvings.

OLD SMOKE-MAN

The sage and storyteller of the Dragon Stone clan is a very wise and profound man, though his words are rarely enlightening or soothing. He, alone among the whole Morudhain race, will gladly receive any visitors to his tribe and tell them the full story of Aedhaine and her tribe, exactly as related in the **Aedhaine's Dream** section in page 4. He also knows all the stories found in the **Chapter Guide** sidebar of each chapter, as told in the **Background** section of each sidebar. Finally, Old Smoke-man knows the full history of his people, the Athans and the Morudhain Lands, including almost all the information included in Chapters One and Three of *The Dragon Stone*. He will gladly tell all of these stories and more; however, he does take a long time to narrate his stories, so that characters asking too much are liable to lose countless hours or even days listening to him. The statistics of Old Smoke-Man can be found in the **Appendix**.

FROM HERE

From the Morudhain Lands, it is possible to return to **Moru Road** and follow it all the way to Mount Moru; depending on the Player Characters' specific location, they may also prefer to head directly to Mount Moru; in this case proceed directly to **The Moru Path** below. As an alternative, they may head to **Stonehold** if they have not done so already.

Stonehold

Coming out of the eastern wall of Mount Moru like a closed window, you see a squat stone fortress among the crags and peaks of the mountain. The irregular terrain shows no way of accessing this fortress; there seems to be a winding path among the rocks a few feet up ahead, though you cannot see how to reach it from here.

Built by a commonwealth of dwarven clans almost ten years ago, the fortress of Stonehold has stood among the rocky slopes of eastern Mount Moru ever since, without bothering or being bothered by its human neighbours. The purpose of its building

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and the current goals of its builders remain a mystery for everyone else in the Moru Country. The basic information about Stonehold and its inhabitants can be found in the book entitled *The Dragon Stone*.

Stonehold is located 50 miles northeast of the Lost Pass Junction (see page 38 in *The Dragon Stone*), among the crags and peaks 10 miles from Mount Moru's east slope. Travelling on foot, it takes roughly three days from the Lost Pass to the Stonehold Fortress.

Entering Stonehold

Entering the dwarven fortress is very difficult in all senses (and the dwarves would not have it any other way). Finding an access to the hidden mountain path leading to the fortress' entrance requires a successful Survival check (DC 20) or Search check (DC 25). The check takes 10 full minutes; a character may take 20 on the check but he would spend more than three hours searching. If the path is not found, every single character must succeed on a Survival check (DC 30) or Climb check (DC 25) to reach the fortress.

Creatures (EL 4+)

Once a character has reached the fortress of Stonehold, he must still deal with the dwarven guards, who have orders not to let any non-dwarf inside.

Stonehold Guards (4 1st level Dwarf Fighters): hp 13 each, see 'NPC Statistics' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

DEVELOPMENT

The encounters in this section require several Diplomacy checks, which assume the character making the check is not a dwarf. If a character attempting a Diplomacy check against any Stonehold dwarf has a visible dwarf companion, add a +4 circumstance bonus to the check. This bonus increases to +10 if the character is a dwarf himself.

The dwarves will not allow outsiders to enter under any circumstance; however, a successful Diplomacy check (DC 25) can convince them of summoning a superior to deal with the visitors.

Stonehold Officer (2nd level Dwarf Fighter): hp 21, see 'NPC Statistics' in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Stonehold officers are more open to dealing with outsiders than their subordinates; however, they still lack the authority to do so directly. They will talk

about the surrounding environment and the recent happenings in Mount Moru, without leaving the fortress or allowing the visitors to come inside. They knew Aedhaine's Morudhain tribe well but will not share information about their fate; they know little else about human affairs. If a visitor wants to discuss important matters, such as trading or the goblin invasion, he must succeed on a Diplomacy check (DC 15) against a Stonehold officer; if this check succeeds, the officers call on their captain, Brai Cobblestone, to deal with the character. If the Diplomacy check result is 30 or more, the visitors are allowed entry and taken directly to Cobblestone himself.

If a character is allowed to talk with Brai Cobblestone, he must still succeed on a Diplomacy check (DC 15) to gain his trust; otherwise, Cobblestone listens to what the character has to say but shares no information himself. A character that gains Cobblestone's trust is granted a full audience. This audience will most likely be held outside Stonehold, unless the Diplomacy check equals 30 or more.

Brai Cobblestone (4th level Dwarf Warrior): CR 3; Size M (4 feet 1 inch tall); HD 4d8+12; hp 33; Init +4 (+4 Improved Initiative); Spd 15 ft.; AC 20 (+8 full plate, +2 heavy steel shield), touch 10, flat-footed 20; Base Atk/Grp +4/+8; Atk +9 melee (masterwork warhammer, 1d8+4/x3) or +5 ranged (masterwork light crossbow, 1d8/19-20); SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +0; SQ dwarf traits; AL LN; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Craft (armoursmithing) +7, Craft (blacksmithing) +5, Craft (stonemasonry) +5, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Craft (weaponsmithing) +5, Gather Information +4, Handle Animal +2, Hide +0, Intimidate +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +0, Ride +7, Spot +4; Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: full plate armour, heavy steel shield, masterwork warhammer, masterwork light crossbow, case with 10 crossbow bolts.

If a character earns a full audience with Brai Cobblestone, he talks about the goblin invasion and what it means for the Stonehold dwarves; see **The Mission** below. If the character is allowed entrance inside Stonehold (a feat very few non-dwarves have ever accomplished), he may freely trade or otherwise interact with the Stonehold dwarves. Basic information about Stonehold can be found in page 11 of *The Dragon Stone*.

If the Player Characters become hostile at any point, they are immediately attacked by the whole Stonehold guard and Stonehold Militia, including Brai Cobblestone and the following figures:

Stonehold Guard (two 2nd level Dwarf Warriors): hp 19, see ‘NPC Classes’ in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Stonehold Elite Guard (two 2nd level Dwarf Fighters): hp 21, see ‘NPC Statistics’ in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Warri Xenostone, Stonehold militia leader (1st level Dwarf Barbarian): hp 15, see ‘NPC Classes’ in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

Stonehold Militia (four 1st level Dwarf Warriors): hp 5 each, see ‘Dwarf’ in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Stonehold Elite Militia (four 1st level Dwarf Fighters): hp 13 each, see ‘NPC Statistics’ in Chapter Four of the *DMG*.

The Mission

A character wishing to earn the Stonehold dwarves’ trust should not only appear honest but also capable, prepared to deal with great danger and come out victorious. If such a character expresses an interest in helping the Stonehold dwarves with their problems, he may receive a mission from them.

The mission is basically to investigate the goblin army that recently took over the ruined fortress below the Mount Moru entrance. The dwarves are worried about this amassing goblin force but they want someone else to do the investigating before they decide to take any action. The dwarves do not give the mission to any character that seems dishonest or unfit to carry it out. If a party is offered and accepts the mission, it is considered to be under contract with the Stonehold; the party is expected to infiltrate the goblin fortress, find out as much as possible about the goblin army and return with proof of their information before a month has passed. Upon completion of the mission, the dwarves will pay 2,500 gold pieces to distribute among the party. No advance or free equipment will be given, though the party is entitled to any booty they find inside the fortress. The dwarves are especially interested in the possibility of there being some of their kin being held prisoner by the goblins; the Stonehold is willing to pay an additional 1,000

gold pieces for any information about dwarves inside the fortress, be they living or dead.

For the Games Master: The True Story of Stonehold

What the Stonehold dwarves will not say to anyone else is the true story behind their presence here and their interest in Mount Moru – the story of the dwarves of Stonehold, their loss and their troubles.

THE DISCOVERY

About a half-century ago, a caravan of dwarven traders that came to deal with the Morudhain discovered a hidden gold vein inside Mount Moru, of which they told humans nothing about. Within a few years, they had secretly built a fully functioning mine to extract the gold. The dwarves kept the mine a closely guarded secret for several years, going out of their way to prevent humans from discovering it. During this time, many legends related to the Haunted Lake and strange happenings in the area could be attributed to the dwarves attempting to scare intruders away from their mines, to which the Haunted Lake was the only outside entrance.

THE CATASTROPHE

When the dwarves were about to officially announce their presence to the rest of the Moru Country, intent on starting a prosperous and long-lasting business with humans near the mountain, the legendary bad luck associated with settling in Mount Moru came down upon them. Without warning or explanation, a flood of unknown origin came from below the caves, washing over the dwarven mine and killing all of the miners. The secret of the mines was lost and nobody, man or dwarf, learned what had happened in many years.

THE RETURN

A decade or two later, another dwarf scouting party came to Morudhain Lands, where they discovered the lost mines, together with the remains of their people’s mining work and the secret of their failure. The scouts hurriedly returned to dwarven territories, where they gathered a few families and warriors to return to Moru Lands and retake the lost mines. By the time the dwarves had returned and organised themselves, Aedhaine’s Moru Tribe had already taken over the upper levels of Mount Moru and dug another mine above their own.

THE ROAD BEGINS

THE FORTRESS

Seeing a whole human tribe blocking the access to their gold, the dwarves decided to proceed with caution. They settled on the rocky slopes east of Mount Moru, where they established good trade routes both with Aedhaine's tribe and the other Morudhain folk; while they did this, they clandestinely scouted the mountain and found the humans had not discovered their mine. At the same time, they built the Stonehold fortress in their adopted territory, with the intention of gradually taking out the gold and bringing it back to the fortress without the Morudhain ever finding out. The strategy seemed to work for a few more years...

THE RESCUE

Suddenly, Aedhaine's Moru Tribe left the mountain and disappeared without a trace. The dwarves could not find any explanation or clue to the reason of the humans' departure, except for a standing stone on the upper tunnels. When they were sure the humans had gone, the dwarves sent a larger expeditionary force to fully explore and settle on the mines, with the task of drying the flooded tunnels, salvaging what resources they could and planning the further extraction of gold from the mines in case they could be rebuilt. This new mining crew kept in contact with the fortress, facilitating the extraction of gold and making increasingly larger envoys of salvaged ore and materials. The dwarves even began considering taking over the Athan ruins that were below the humans' mines; however, the goblins came first.

THE GOBLINS

The goblin army arrived without warning, with the force of a tidal wave. The meagre, discreet dwarven scouting parties were no match for the goblin forces; they decided to retreat to their fortress without revealing their mining activities. When the goblin army began settling on the Athan ruins between the dwarven and human mines, the dwarves became justly fearful of losing their mine to these new neighbours, much more hated and dangerous than humans. The dwarves cancelled all gold convoys from their lost mine and ordered the mining crew to return to Stonehold – though it never came back.

THE PRISONER

The last dwarven mining crew had been exploring the lower tunnels below the mines, to ascertain the dangers and ore to be found in deeper levels.

When they came back up to the mine, mere weeks ago, they were surprised to find the upper accesses overtaken by goblins; after a few scouting missions, they discovered the Stonehold had abandoned the mine and the goblins had settled in the Athan ruins above it. During one of these missions, Braldi, one of their chief scouts, was captured by the goblins; his subordinates decided to settle in a secret area they had previously dug below the fortress, from where they could watch the goblins closely and think of ways to undermine their strength. They sent messengers back to Stonehold to warn the fortress of their plight; however, these messengers were slain by the grimlocks in the intermediate caves (dungeon **Area C**; see page 22 in *The Path of Archaneroth*). Currently, the dwarf party is completely cut off from Stonehold, hidden among a goblin army and one of its members remains a prisoner of the goblins...

THE PRESENT

For several months, the dwarves have assumed the worst – that the goblins discovered the mines and slew every dwarf they found. However, their natural itch for gold will not allow them to let go; they want somebody else to scout the goblin fortress and find out what truly happened, just in case their mines have not been discovered. For the same reason, the dwarves will not tell anything about their mines to outsiders, even to those charged with **The Mission** (see above). It is enough for unwitting mercenaries to scout the fortress and return with useful information about the goblins' forces in case it becomes necessary to stage an attack against them; the mercenaries need not know anything about the dwarven mines. In addition, the information might include the fate of the lost mining crew or, even better, some indirect clues about whether the goblins have overtaken the mines or not.

FROM HERE

The Player Characters are now very close to Mount Moru; they may simply cross the rocky hills southwest to the Lost Pass junction (see page 38 in *The Dragon Stone*) and reach the start of Moru Path in no longer than three days. In this case, proceed directly to **The Moru Path**, below. If the Player Characters have not visited **The Morudhain Lands** already, they may do so now simply by travelling west into the lands of the Dragon Stone Clan. Proceed to the corresponding section according to the Player Characters' decision.

The Moru Path

Finally, you approach the ominous shadow of Mount Moru itself. The mountain looks like a thousand rock needles trying to pierce the sky, a grey mass of jagged points and spikes ready to stab and bleed any living thing that touches them – and among these peaks, there is a winding path leading up the mountain, meandering through the sharp rocks like a grey snake.

Moru Road ends at the base of Mount Moru, where a cave-in blocked the road's further access inside Mount Moru at the point known as the Lost Pass. A rough trail leads up into the mountain, starting eastward from the Lost Pass and climbing around the eastern mountain face until it reaches the Entrance Caves. By following this path from the base of the mountain, it takes roughly a day to reach the Entrance Caves (dungeon **Area A**; see page 4 in *The Path of Archaneroth*).

ENCOUNTERS IN THE MORU PATH

When the Player Characters first arrive to Mount Moru, the Games Master should not use the encounter tables shown on page 5 of *The Path of Archaneroth*, as they usually indicate relatively high encounter levels. Instead, the party encounters three eagles during their ascent; these birds only attack if they find a relatively small and undefended target in the party, such as a dog, a donkey or a pony; otherwise, they simply fly around and let the party pass through.

Eagles (3): hp 5 each; see 'Eagle' in Chapter Two of the *MM*.

FROM HERE

If the Player Characters decide to take Moru Path up the mountain, in less than a day they are at the entrance of the Moru dungeon – proceed to **The Entrance Caves** below. It is not possible to enter the Lost Pass by mundane means; in the event the Player Characters managed to somehow unblock the passage, it leads directly into Dungeon Area **I2** at the Resting Place (see page 56 in *The Path of Archaneroth*). Alternatively, they could attempt to take the west direction around the mountain; after one day and a

half's walk, they would reach the Haunted Lake (see page 38 in *The Dragon Stone*) and the treacherous mountain trail leading up into the upper lake and the Drowned Mines (Dungeon **Area E**, see page 28 in *The Path of Archaneroth*). Proceed to **The Entrance Caves** below or to the corresponding dungeon area, according to the Player Characters' decision and resources.

The Entrance Caves

Finally you reach a cave entrance in the mountain face. This, then, is the beginning of your journey – the entrance to the depths of Mount Moru, the so-called Mountain of Terror. The cave looks like the mouth of a monster or, more accurately, that of a ghost – a screaming vengeful spirit, waiting to devour those that enter its dark throat. Many strange symbols appear carved around the arch of the cave; they are at least a few years old, though not ancient – somebody made them relatively recently. Most of all, you feel alone up here – alone here, among the dreary rocks, so far above the ground and so close to the high winds and the empty greying sky; alone facing the gloomy, solitary entrance to the caves – to the ancient underground realm of Mount Moru. The wind blows a tune of loneliness, dust and desolation as you turn to the entrance and step into the darkness...

The Moru dungeon proper begins as soon as the Player Characters enter **Area A** (the Entrance Caves at the end of Moru Path). Here is where the real adventure starts: the first level of the dungeon. The entrance to the area has several Morudhain carvings indicating the domain of Aedhaine's Moru Tribe; they have fallen into disuse during the last year.

From this point, the Games Master should use the dungeon key presented in *The Path of Archaneroth* to control the Player Characters' progress through the dungeons and any encounters they might have; the following adventure chapters should be used to guide the narrative, while *The Path of Archaneroth* is the key to the dungeon, its rooms and its encounters.

THE GOBLIN GOD

The Stormcloud has arrived! Let the world know! Let the Morudhain Lands tremble with fear at the coming of the Blood of the Stormcloud and the Goblin God!

Upon entering the upper levels of mount Moru, Player Characters stumble upon a burgeoning goblin army hidden in the mountain, commanded by a mighty bugbear leader and united by a new religion. It is their task to investigate as much as they can about this army – or at least to pass through their fortress safely...

The Gathering of the Stormcloud

The history of the Stormcloud company started when young Akkal Tor, a bugbear from the Moru badlands, realised he was different from his brethren. He never knew who his father was, yet by puberty he had no doubt the blood of something more than bugbear flowed in his veins. His lightning gifts and monstrous strength convinced him he was indeed the scion of the thunder spirits and he was destined to rule the land in the name of his heavenly parent. He killed his mother when she would not tell him who his father was but he did not care – he was sure enough of his divine heritage. During the following years, by displays of brute strength and staggering power, he had gathered a sizeable force of followers from the weaker goblins and hobgoblins of the region. Akkal Tor's raiders quickly became well known and hated among the settlements of the southeast Moru Country, yet the budding warlord wanted more than hate – he wanted fear.

The Goblin God

While Akkal Tor painted the Moru wasteland red with the blood of his murderous raids, another power emerged among the local goblins. Two goblin priests claimed to have discovered the One True Goblin God; they had already converted a few goblin bands to their faith. Their angle was that they could actually introduce a living, breathing god-like creature to their followers – a goblin-like demon from the lower planes, who agreed to pass himself as the Goblin God in exchange for the tribute and worship, letting the goblin priests rake the material benefits. Emulating

Akkal Tor, the two goblins gathered a few dozen followers and discovered they could have more than simple religious fear – they could have power.

A MEETING OF FORCES

When Akkal Tor's raiders met the cult of the Goblin God, they were quickly hooked by the clerics' scam; Akkal Tor himself was awed by the existence of another god-like being like he fancied himself to be. After some fast-talking from the two clerics, Akkal Tor was convinced his fate was to lead the army that would seat the Goblin God in the throne of the Morudhain Lands. The bugbear and goblins gathered both their bands of followers into a small army and made towards Mount Moru, where they knew they would find some Athan ruins to settle in and build an empire from there – just a few weeks before the Player Characters arrive at the mountain...

Chapter Sections

The adventure begins when the Player Characters enter the Moru dungeon via the Entrance Caves (**Area A**); from there, they discover the hidden path into the goblin fortress and – presumably – fight the Stormcloud Company at its own headquarters. The following adventure sections are divided in areas, with each area being a separate dungeon level.

The Entrance Caves: Here the Player Characters enter the abandoned Morudhain mines, where they find a few lesser creatures and the first Stormcloud goblin guards.

The Goblin Fortress: This section is the Stormcloud Fortress (**Area B**), full of goblin and orc guards. The first floor has little more than soldiers and barracks; other than gathering clues about the place and slaying guards, the Player Characters may find Braldi, the dwarven prisoner. The second floor of the Fortress includes Akkal Tor's quarters, as well as some of the nastiest Stormcloud forces. The Player Characters may also stumble into the Stonehold dwarves, who plan to strike at the Stormcloud army from within.

The Lost Tunnels: These natural caves below the Fortress serve as a secret access to the Temple of the goblin God (see below) but they are filled with bloodthirsty underground monsters.

Chapter Guide: The Goblin God

This is arguably the hardest chapter in the whole campaign; despite the goblins being relatively weak, the forces stacked against the Player Characters – a fully manned fortress – are likely to overwhelm them at such low levels. The Games Master should set things up so that the Player Characters see the convenience of a stealthy, tactical approach to entering the fortress; the early encounters with the goblin guards in **Area A** are a good way to leak information and advice to this effect. For example, a conveniently talkative prisoner may hint at the dangers of taking the fortress head-on and even suggest possible infiltration tactics such as disguise or *invisibility*. In short, the fortress is quite a challenge for a low-level party, so it is a good idea to nudge Player Characters towards a strategic approach.

Expected Character Level: Before beginning this chapter, Player Characters should be 1st or 2nd level. Higher-level characters should enter the adventure at a later point, as indicated in the **Chapter Guide** sidebar of each of the following chapters.

PLAYING THE GOBLIN GOD AS A SEPARATE ADVENTURE

The Goblin God may be played as a separate scenario for 1st or 2nd level characters. To introduce Player Characters directly to this chapter, start the adventure as normal (see **The Road Begins**, page 8), simply eschewing all references to Aedhaine's tribe, their disappearance or the Temple of Iri's Moru expedition; the Meadowvale Non-Player Characters say nothing about any disappeared Morudhain and the Temple of Iri clerics have no mission to give the Player Characters.

Character Hooks

If playing **The Goblin God** separately, use one of the following options to hook the characters into the adventure:

- The Player Characters received news that the dwarves from the Stonehold Fortress are looking for a few good men to undertake a hazardous mission inside Mount Moru.
- At least one of the Player Characters is a dwarf from Stonehold, sent by his people to scout the fortress. In this case, the remaining Player Characters may, at the Games Master's discretion, be considered friends of the Stonehold dwarves, which would grant them the right to enter the dwarven fortress without any additional diplomatic effort.

Adapting the Adventure Further

When running **The Goblin God** independently, apply the following modifications to the main story:

- Remove Aurelia (page 11), Cormac Drake (page 12), Rann Shieldborne (page 13) and The Wolf/Aurebaor (page 14) from the adventure.
- If **The Goblin God** is played as a separate adventure, it is much more important for the Player Characters to actually talk to the Stonehold dwarves and Captain Brai Cobblestone, for otherwise they might miss the entire adventure, being left with no reason at all to explore Mount Moru. Therefore the Games Master should make it much easier for Player Characters to get an audience at the **Stonehold** section (page 15), allowing them to meet Cobblestone without any Diplomacy check. The adventure may proceed normally from that point.
- Treat the special clues and treasures from dungeon **Areas A6, B19, B34 and D4** as simple background elements with no further story significance.
- All accesses to dungeon **Area E** are blocked by rubble, including the outside entrance from The Haunted Lake. If the Games Master wishes to allow his Player Characters to freely explore the levels below dungeon **area D**, it is strongly recommended that he run the full **Blood of Dragons** adventure instead.
- The dwarves at dungeon **Areas B17 and B31** make no mention of the Drowned Mines.

THE GOBLIN GOD

Temple of the Goblin God: Here, the Player Characters could have the final battle against the Goblin God and his clerics and also find some additional secrets from the ancient Athan fortress...

The Entrance Caves

These tunnels constitute the uppermost – and easiest – access into Mount Moru. Formerly natural caves, the tunnels were turned into a working silver mine when Aedhaine's Moru Tribe settled there more than a decade ago. The mine is derelict since the Moru tribe disappeared last year, during which time it also became home to a variety of underground monsters – and also the outer guard post for the Goblin Fortress below.

While the Player Characters remain at the Entrance Caves, describe the areas, encounters and dungeon characteristics as featured in **Area A** of the dungeon (see page 4 of *The Path of Archaneroth*).

Exploring the Entrance Caves

If the Player Characters let their presence in **Area A** be known, for example by allowing a goblin guard to escape alive, all future encounters with Stormcloud goblins or orcs, including Sergeant Gurrghah (at **A15**), should assume the enemies are prepared for the Player Characters; if possible, they set up a trap by sending half the goblins from **A14** to ambush the Player Characters at **A10**, while the other half attempts to sneak on the intruders from behind by using the **A3** secret door. This means that, if the Player Characters have still to reach **A10**, by the time they do they will likely have to deal with an ambush by all the goblins from **A14**, half of them from above and half of them from below.

Should the Player Characters defeat this ambush, modify all future encounters in **Area A** as follows:

- **A12** and **A13** are locked and deserted.
- All three of the orc guards from **A12-A13**, if they are still alive, wait for the Player Characters along with the three guard dogs at **Area A11**.
- **Area A15** is deserted; Sergeant Gurrghah has run back to the Fortress to warn his superiors about this invasion.

If Sergeant Gurrghah has had time to warn the Stormcloud officers at **Area B**, he is sent back after

one hour with a detachment of eight goblin soldiers (1st level warriors, hp 5 each) to find the intruders and bring them back dead or alive if they remain in **Area A**. If the Player Characters have already entered **Area B** by now, they find it on full alert.

RESTING

If the Player Characters have managed to clean **Area A** of enemies without raising an alert, they may rest and recover their strength safely in either the **A12** or **A14** barracks. There is still a 10% chance per hour of a random encounter during rest, as detailed in page 5 of *The Path of Archaneroth*. If they could not stop Sergeant Gurrghah from raising an alert, it is much more convenient to go on before their enemies have had a chance to prepare themselves; if the Player Characters really need to rest, it is better to exit the mines via **A1** and rest outside until things calm down.

EXITING AREA A

The Player Characters may exit **Area A** through the tunnel by which they came in, south of **A1**; otherwise, the only exit from **Area A** is the access to the Goblin Fortress at **A15**. The Games Master should try to subtly suggest the **A15** access should not be used without previously making a good plan, as there is a fully manned – and probably alerted – army behind the door.

The Goblin Fortress

This area, formerly an Athan outpost built to defend the upper entrance into Mount Moru, was abandoned thousands of years ago and has been constantly ransacked and explored in the intervening centuries, until nothing was left but bare and forgotten ruins. Two moons past, the Stormcloud Company chose the fortress for a base of operations; they became fully settled in their new quarters barely a week ago. Currently the Goblin Fortress is an active and functional war citadel, housing dozens of goblin and orc soldiers under the command of Akkal Tor and the Goblin God. Although dungeon area **B** is the Goblin Fortress proper, the Temple of the Goblin God (**Area D**) is actually the original building's basement, so it should also be considered a part of the Fortress.

While the Player Characters remain in the Goblin Fortress, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area B: The Goblin Fortress**, as detailed in page 9 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

The Mission

If the Player Characters received the mission to scout the Goblin Fortress for Stonehold, their task here is to study the fortress until they have gathered enough information about the Stormcloud and its forces to give a substantial report to the Stonehold dwarves; even better if they find Braldi and his dwarf team. If the Player Characters are here on their own or looking for Aedhaine's Tribe, their only task is to find a way through the Fortress, which will surely require dealing with the Stormcloud Company first.

If the Player Characters return to Stonehold with insufficient information, they are sent back to investigate more, particularly if they have not found the lost mining crew. If necessary, captain Cobblestone is willing to offer a 1,000 gold piece bonus for the rescue of the mining crew, though he only makes the offer if the Player Characters return without having rescued them.

The Hoary Howler

There is a gnoll living in the derelict shrine at **Area B8**. The rest of the Stormcloud know him as Howler the Hyena; nobody is really sure why he joined the company or why was he even accepted, as he is completely insane. The gnoll believes himself to be a sage, a mystic prophet; he calls himself the 'Hoary Howler', a title that fits his barmy self-perception, and requests to be addressed as such at all times. To keep him busy, the Stormcloud officers put them 'in charge of the temple', an abandoned Dragon Lord altar that nobody uses; however, this twisted Howler's damaged mind even further, especially when he discovered symbols and writings consecrated to the Dragon Lord in the old altar; now he is the only member of the Stormcloud army that knows of the Dragon Lord and actually worships him – perhaps the only living Dragon Lord worshipper left in the world, besides Aogarn the wizard (see page 120). The encounter with Howler is detailed in **Area B8** of the dungeon (page 12 in *The Path of Archaneroth*).

DEVELOPMENT

If the Player Characters interact with the Hoary Howler in any fashion, he assumes they are new faithful coming for illumination and spares no effort to convince them of the greatness of the Dragon Lord and his cult – mostly improvised nonsense, as Howler does not actually *know* the slightest about the Dragon Lord cult.

The Page

For all his senseless pretensions, Howler does have a true Athan relic – a single parchment page, containing text written in what seems to be Draconic. He shows it to everyone as the one true word of the Dragon Lord; however, he has virtually no idea of what it reads as he understands nothing about Draconic either. In any event, the page is not even written in Draconic – it is actually a variation of the Athan Secret Tongue. If the Player Characters manage to decipher the text (the rules to decipher the Secret Tongue are detailed in page 53 of *The Dragon Stone*), they read this:

*The Dragon God Still Lives
He Sleeps Below the Mountain
He Sleeps Below the World
His Tears Have Been Lost
Follow The Path of His Tears
Wake The Dragon God...*

If the text is read aloud, treat this page as a *locate object* scroll; if used in this fashion, the text is destroyed (which does not make Howler happy).

The Stonehold Dwarves

The lost mining crew from Stonehold is still in the Fortress, undiscovered by the goblins; they remain hidden in secret tunnels to the southwest of the lower fortress (**Area B31**); Braldi, one of their officers, is still a prisoner of the Stormcloud army, kept in the cell at **B17**. The members of the mining crew remain near the Fortress, attempting to rescue their leader; Braldi has been systematically tortured every day to make him confess the location of his companions.

DEVELOPMENT

Both Braldi and his companions are deeply thankful for any help from the Player Characters, though they will not say a word about their Drowned Mines or their mission.

If the Player Characters prove they come with orders from Stonehold, the dwarves agree to return to Stonehold with them; however, first they want to find their companions – that is, the mining crew will want to attempt Braldi's rescue (**B17**) and Braldi will try to lead the Player Characters to his mining crew (**B31**).

Once Braldi is freed and the rest of the mining crew found, the dwarves suggest leaving by the secret tunnel at **Area B32** – using the outside exit, not the detour to **Area C** (see page 20 in *the Path of Archaneroth*) and

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from there double back around the mountain and to Stonehold; if the Player Characters agree, proceed to **Ending the Chapter** below. Whatever happens, the dwarves do their best to prevent the Player Characters from exploring **Area C** below, as this could lead them to the dwarves' lost mine.

Akkal Tor

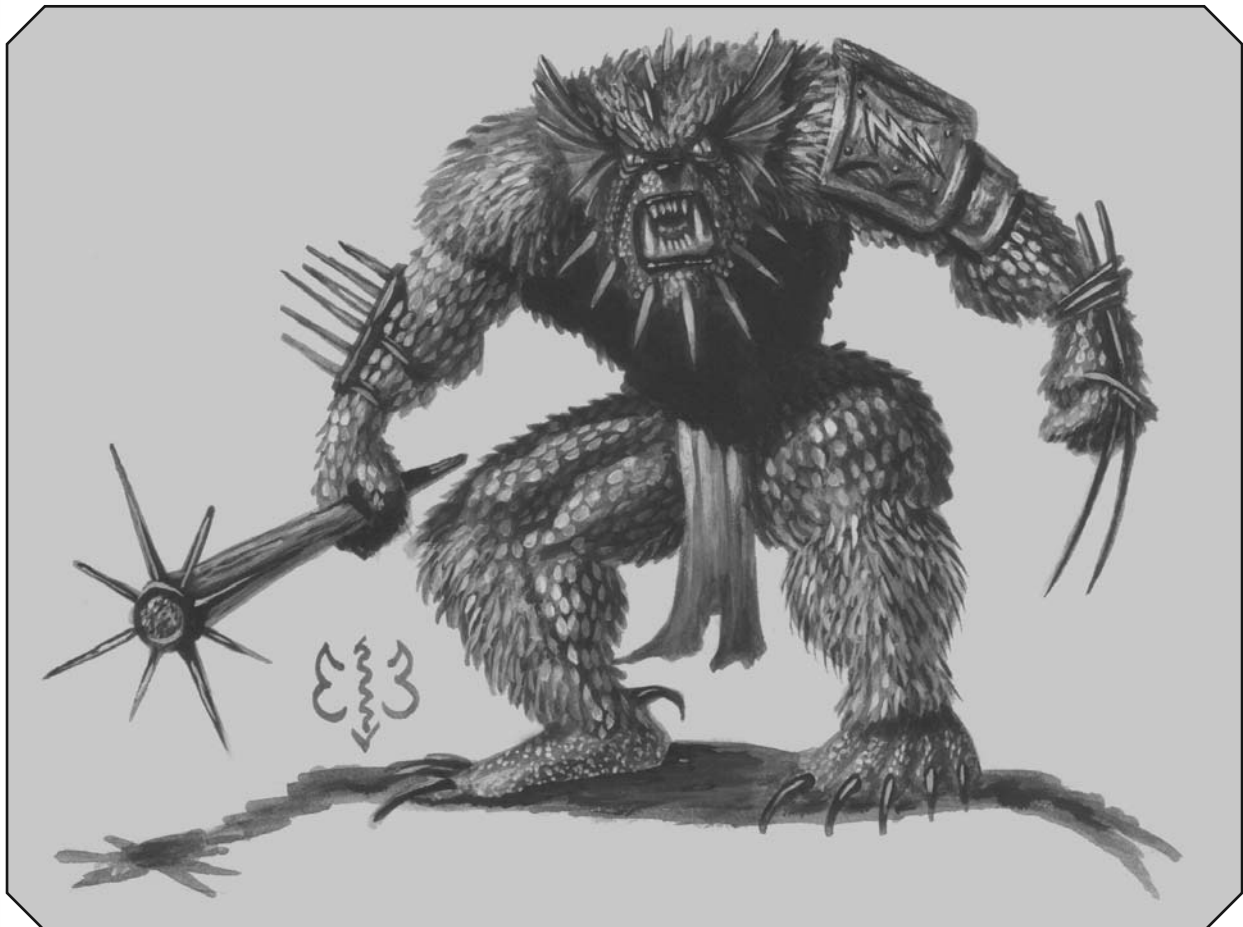
The leader of the Stormcloud Company and ruler of the Goblin Fortress is Akkal Tor the Goblin General, Champion of the Goblin God and Lord of the Blue Thunder. He can usually be found in his quarters at **B35** or his throne room (**B34**); though he will not hesitate to leave his chambers and seek the Player Characters out if they cause too much of a commotion in the Fortress. The statistics of Akkal Tor can be found in the **Appendix**.

AKKAL TOR'S NOTES

Akkal Tor has made several notes, as well written as his limited ability could allow, about his future plans of conquest and his army. He keeps these notes hidden in a locked chest under his bed; they

go into great detail about how he plans to subjugate all living beings inside Mount Moru and conquer all the ruins below the mountain in the name of the Goblin God. Once all of Mount Moru is under his control, he intends to march on with his army, which shall surely be enormous by then, and take all of the Morudhain Lands by sword and claw. The notes continue on praising Akkal Tor and his own might, until they digress into senseless speculation. The only interesting element about this second half of the bugbear's notes could be his references about his inheritance – he thought he was the descendant of a god of storms... did he suspect what he truly was? Do the Player Characters?

Finally, Akkal Tor's notes contain very useful information about the Goblin Fortress, including a surprisingly well-made map of the entire ruins; it faithfully depicts the whole of **Areas B** and **D**, except for the secret passages in both areas (**B26-B28**, **B32** and the passages leading to and from **B7**). More importantly, this map includes the following additional information:



THE GOBLIN GOD

- The creatures located in areas **B1**, **B3-B15**, **B20-B22**, **B24-B25** and **B34**
- Guard turn shift times at areas **B5-B6** and **B10-B11**
- Hours and times of the Goblin God's 'appearances' at **Area D6** (the next one is 1d6 days from now)
- The location of the 'dwarven prisoner' at **B17**
- The traps at **B16**, **B23** and **B33**
- A full inventory of the weapons and armour to be found in **Area B24**

EXPLORING THE FORTRESS

If the Player Characters let their presence in **Area A** be known, the Fortress is on alert for a full 48 hours; during this time, all Stormcloud soldiers encountered have orders to sound an alarm as soon as they see intruders and are never found distracted (unless successfully taken by surprise); also, random encounter chances while inside the fortress are doubled (20% per hour). If Sergeant Gurrghah is sent back after the Player Characters (see above) and does not return after 48 hours, the fortress remains on alert for a full week.

If the Player Characters are detected inside the Fortress, an alarm is sounded and squads of nearby soldiers are sent to the area to investigate. This means that keyed encounters from the area nearest to the Player Characters come out of their area and encounter the Player Characters as soon as possible, wherever they can catch up with them. If the Player Characters defeat this recon team, the next nearest keyed encounter is sent after them if possible, and so on. If the Player Characters have not been stopped an hour after they were detected inside the Fortress, Akkal Tor himself comes out of his chambers and seeks them, accompanied by all the hobgoblin guards at **B22** areas.

An alternative plan is for the Player Characters to enter the Fortress stealthily. In this case, they can take the uniforms from the orc guards at **Area A12**; they will fit any Medium creature, which may then pass as one of the Stormcloud's orc or human mercenaries. Small creatures may attempt to disguise themselves as goblins. If the Player Characters manage to successfully carry out this plan, they must pretend to be Stormcloud soldiers for an indefinite amount of time, until they find out enough about the Goblin Fortress to go on their journey. If they are here under orders from Stonehold, this means returning to the dwarves with their information; if they came here on

another mission, to go on means to find an exit from the Fortress.

DEVELOPMENT

If the Player Characters are discovered and captured, they are taken to the dungeons at **B18**, where they must wait until they are taken to fight the Goblin Bull at **Area B29**. If the Player Characters defeat the Goblin Bull, they are turned into the Stormcloud Company's gladiatorial champions, forced to fight among themselves or against other prisoners, such as the captured Stonehold dwarves, until they die or free themselves.

If believable news spread inside the Fortress about the Player Characters defeating Akkal Tor in any way, the Stormcloud forces fall into disarray and become disorganised, attacking out of concert and without strategy; also, the forces at **Area D** (see below) attempt to flee the mountain via the Lost Tunnels (see below). If the Player Characters defeat the Goblin God by any means and then let the Stormcloud Company see it, the army scatters to the four winds, panicked by the sight of their defeated god.

BESTING

If the Player Characters manage to infiltrate the Stormcloud Company, they are entitled to use the human mercenaries' barracks (**B11** areas and the **B2** areas near them), where they may rest and recover without being bothered except by other human mercenaries wanting to fight for the bunk beds – or discovering them.

Other than this option, it is very difficult to find a safe place to rest in the Upper Goblin Fortress; even if the Player Characters manage to rout or defeat most of its inhabitants, stray goblin soldiers are bound to remain at the building, hiding or wandering within its halls. The best place for the Player Characters to rest and recoup their strength inside the Fortress is the dwarven outpost at **B31**, though it requires dealing with the dwarves first. Other than this, the Player Characters' best choice is to exit the Fortress, preferably through the upper passages (the Entrance Tunnels and so on) and then rest outside.

EXITING AREA B

There are three exits from **Area B**. First, the main entrance (**B1**) leads out to the Entrance Tunnels (**Area A**); second, the secret passage behind the Throne Room (**B33**) leads to the Temple of the Goblin God (**Area D**); finally, the secret passage at **B32** leads down to the Lost Tunnels (**Area C**).

THE GOBLIN GOD



discovered a secret passage recently, leading from its chambers into **Area C**. Unknown to the conniving goblin priests that use it to scare other goblins into submission, the creature has taken a liking to exploring this secret passage; he spent the last few days stalking and killing subterranean humanoids whenever he was not required to play god in the Temple above (**Area D**). A clever Party that discovers this may use it to end the Goblin God scam at the root, or at least to gain an easy 'back door' into the Temple of the Goblin God.

Exploring the Tunnels

If the Player Characters cause a more or less significant commotion among the

subterranean creatures, it is quite possible their leader will want to talk to them, probably even sending some of his grimlocks with messages of truce. The leader needs able warriors for a couple of 'jobs' that his subjects have not been up to; if the Player Characters are willing to negotiate, the chief accepts to forget any of his slain people *and* give a reward in exchange for the deaths of three dangers to his community: the spider-witch Kalidri (**Area C10**), the bloodthirsty killer known as The Fury (**Area C6**) and the murderous Goblin God itself (**Area C11**). Of course the leader plans simply to pit these dangers against each other and has no intention of actually paying anything, unless the Player Characters prove strong enough that crossing them is not a good idea (after all, the leader wants his problems done away with, not increased).

BESTING

The best place to rest in the Lost Tunnels is **Area C9**, provided the threats at **C5** and **C11** have been dealt with.

The Lost Tunnels

This natural cave complex has remained buried below the Fortress for centuries; nobody knows the tunnels are there, not even the Stormcloud goblins living a few dozen feet above them. The caves are home to a primitive tribe of subterranean sub-men, hidden from the world outside and civilisation since time out of mind. So far only the dwarven mining crews from Stonehold have ever encountered – and avoided – these creatures; the rest of the world is entirely oblivious to their presence.

While the Player Characters remain in The Lost Tunnels, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area C: Lost Tunnels**, as detailed in page 22 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

Neither these tunnels nor the humanoids living in them were tied to the main adventure in any way, though the passages serve as a quick access between **Areas B, D** and **E** for adventurers willing to dare their dangers. However, the creature known as the Goblin God (**D7**)

EXITING AREA C

Area C serves as a passage between three areas. The **C1** passage leads to the **B32** tunnel at the Goblin Fortress; the **C2** tunnel leads up to the secret passage behind **Area D7** in the Temple of the Goblin God; finally, the half-flooded passage at **C3** leads down to the mines at **Area E**.

Temple of the Goblin God

This used to be the secret temple of the Dragon Lord below the Athan Fortress; the Stormcloud Company stumbled into it while exploring their new home, when five low-rank soldiers fell to the trap before the staircase. When they managed to explore and take possession of the secret temple, they set it up as the new home for the Goblin God himself, where he currently lives with his two clerics, the goblins Azhra and Boghras. Only a few elite officers (including, of course, Akkal Tor) are allowed access into the Temple, where the Goblin God still holds regular public appearances.

While the Player Characters remain in the Temple of the Goblin God, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area D: Temple of the Goblin God**, as detailed in page 26 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

From a narrative point of view, this area is just an extension of the Goblin Fortress (**Area B**). If Player Characters came with the task of investigating the Stormcloud Company, their mission here also consists of finding out as much as they can about the Stormcloud Company and harming them as much as possible during the investigation. Since simply defeating Akkal Tor technically disbands the Stormcloud, coming all the way down here to deal with the Goblin God is not an absolute necessity – however, making sure he *is* dealt with is the best option for the safety of the lands.

DEVELOPMENT

If the Player Characters made their presence known at **Area B**, they find every guard and creature on alert, awake and ready to meet them. In any event, if the guards see any intruders they sound an alarm in the entire temple. The two goblin priests respond to this warning by fleeing to **Area D6**, while they send their gargoyles (**Area D3**) to contain the invaders. If the

Player Characters survive and reach **Area D6**, they find both goblin clerics *and* the Goblin God, waiting for them there.

If the Player Characters indeed defeat Akkal Tor and make it public before entering the Temple, they probably find it empty, as all its occupants flee after the fall of the Stormcloud leader. In this case, all secret and locked doors are open, including the passage at **D7**, which the Goblin God (and perhaps his clerics) used to escape. There are no treasures or creatures anywhere in the temple, as they all took their possessions and ran. Both goblin clerics and their false ‘god’ simply run away from Mount Moru, hoping to practice the ‘Goblin God’ scam in another region.

THE GOBLIN GOD APPEARS

The Temple, particularly the ‘secret chamber’ at **Area D6**, is frequently used for the staged Goblin God ‘appearances’ by which the clerics Azhra and Boghras retain subtle control of the entire Stormcloud Army.

DEVELOPMENT

Should the Player Characters discover the fact of the Goblin God’s ‘appearances’, for example by questioning a guard, they could bide their time and wait for the next scheduled show. If the Player Characters want to investigate the Goblin God’s ‘appearances’, they need to interrogate a hobgoblin or bugbear officer (including Akkal Tor) or, if they manage to enter the Fortress stealthily, make a successful Gather Information check (DC 25) among the Stormcloud Company. Success means they find out the time (1d6 days for now) and place (**Area D6**) of the Goblin God’s next scheduled appearance; how they wish to use this information is up to them. They also find out the whole of **Area D** is off-limits to human or orc mercenaries and low-level goblin soldiers.

During one of the Goblin God’s public sightings, many high-ranking characters from the Stormcloud Company gather in **Area D6**. There are 2d6 hobgoblin officers (as found in **B22** areas), as well as the bugbear bodyguard from **B9**, the two goblin priests and of course Akkal Tor.

If the Player Characters are ever detected inside the Fortress, appearances by the Goblin God are cancelled for as long as the Fortress remains in a state of alert.

THE GOBLIN GOD

If the Player Characters defeat the Goblin God, the entire Stormcloud Company disbands in panic, never to regroup.

RESTING

There are no safe places to rest inside the Temple of the Goblin God, unless every enemy in the area has been dealt with. Otherwise, the best option is to find the secret passage at **D7**, use it to flee to **Area C** and rest there.

EXITING AREA D

There are only two exits from **Area D**; the trapped ascending staircase at **B33** and the secret passage out of **D7**.

Ending the Chapter

Chapter One ends when one or both of the following conditions are met:

- The Player Characters find the lower exits from the Goblin Fortress and the access to **Area E**.
- The Player Characters complete all the missions required by the Stonehold dwarves.

Player Characters should have reached 5th level by the end of the first chapter, after they receive all the rewards corresponding to their actions (see below); if they have not, the Games Master should try and encourage them to explore the Fortress further so they can have a few more encounters and tie any loose ends. An entire adventure could be based on the potential loose ends from Chapter One:

- Was Akkal Tor truly defeated?
- Did the Player Characters locate the dwarven mining crew? Was Braldi rescued?
- Did the goblin priests escape?
- Is the Goblin God still alive? Is it possible he may come back?
- Did the Player Characters explore **Area C**? Did they meet the grimlock leader?

RETURNING TO STONEHOLD

If the Player Characters were on the payroll of Stonehold dwarves, they might want to return and report their progress occasionally during the adventure. When the Player Characters return to Stonehold from the Goblin Fortress, what happens next depend on what they accomplished during their investigation:

- If the Player Characters return without enough information about the Stormcloud, they are required to go back to the Fortress and investigate further; otherwise they shall not be paid for their effort.
- If the Player Characters return with significant and useful information about the Stormcloud but they did not rescue the dwarven mining crew, the Stonehold dwarves are satisfied but offer a 1,000 gp bonus if the Player Characters will go back and save their captive kin.
- If the Player Characters return with the captive dwarves, the Stonehold command decides to attack the Goblin Fortress; the Player Characters are welcome to take part in the attack for a share of the loot. If the Player Characters already took care of Akkal Tor and/or the Goblin God, the dwarves win the battle easily.

Regardless of whether the mission is successful or not, the dwarves recognise the danger of attempting to settle in Mount Moru and decide to wait things out, being content with the ore they have already recovered and postponing their full retaking of the Drowned Mines until someone else cleans Mount Moru of its taint and makes it safe to live there again. However, if they end in friendly terms with the Player Characters, their city remains a good place to visit for rest and recovery between adventures.

REWARDS

The Stonehold dwarves honour their end of the bargain and pay the party 2,500 gold pieces for their investigation. In addition, if they found the mining crew inside the fortress, they receive a 1,000 gold piece bonus plus a 100 gp bonus for each dwarf they brought back safely. Finally, they receive another 1,000 gp bonus if they defeated Akkal To and/or the Goblin God.

The Player Characters may, of course, keep any booty they have found at the Goblin Fortress.

STORY EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Give the Player Characters 500 experience points if they led Braldi safely back to Stonehold, plus 1,000 experience points if they contacted the rest of his mining crew. Give them an extra 3,500 experience points if they successfully routed/disbanded the Stormcloud Company, plus another 1,500 experience points if they receive any reward from the dwarves for it.

EARTH AND WATER

Earth was drowned and water was filled with dirt...

The Player Characters enter the Flooded Dwarven Mines, intent on exploring them or finding a way deeper into the mountain – however, during their exploration, they stumble upon a war between two elemental spirits – and a newer danger, greater than both of them...

An Elemental Struggle

Many millennia ago, when Mount Moru was created from the primal mud of the world, this mud suddenly split in two forces – earth and water. These forces were instant enemies, maddened from the pain of separation. They fought for many centuries, until they reached a settlement – earth would get the surface and surrounding territories, while water would claim the voids and the depths. There was, however, a place where this war never ended – a tunnel complex just below the upper levels of Mount Moru, where both earth and water had a strong presence.

GROUND AND GORGE

The first of these struggling forces was Ground, a benevolent elemental being that controlled half of the tunnels, kept them dry and filled them with the valuable minerals of the world. The second was Gorge, a mistrusting spirit of the depths that made its half of the caves as dark, damp and inhospitable as possible. These two forces struggled for control of the tunnels for millennia, with no side gaining the upper hand. Their main difference was that Ground trusted mortals and wanted their welfare, while Gorge feared them and sought their deaths.

THE COMING OF THE MASTER

The creature known as the Master appeared one day in the eastern caves of the region, spawned from the watery depths guarded by Gorge. The Master sought to enslave mortals to feed its supernatural hunger and power lust; as Gorge disliked mortals, particularly intruders to its realm, the two creatures reached an immediate understanding. The Master was allowed to settle in the caves, to which he lured all intruders to Gorge's realms; there, he robbed them of their free will and used them to make fish-slaves – a cruel mockery of humanity, twisted by the powers of corrupting water; a symbolic revenge that Gorge could not help

but love. Ground could do nothing to prevent this, except trying to warn mortals; however, they were often more interested in stealing Ground's gold than saving their own lives. Thus the Master ascended to power, slowly turning the caves into a place of terror and evil; this worried Ground, who saw that Gorge's hate had gotten out of hand in allowing such an evil creature to settle in their caves.

THE DWARVES AND THE FLOOD

When the first dwarven scouts arrived to the tunnels, Gorge's fears appeared justified, as they dug and chipped away at Ground's realm, taking out the earth's precious treasures and stealing them away. Ground was delighted, however; first, because he liked being of use to the dwarves; second, because he saw hope in their arrival – hope that they would find and destroy the Master. Sadly, the dwarves were greedier than Ground accounted for; they tried to dig into Gorge's realm before exploring it, hungry for the possible treasures it might contain. Gorge was terrified and greatly offended at this, so it used all of its power to summon the great dark waters from below to drown their enemies and waste their deeds away. Gorge created a great flood that drowned the mines and killed the dwarves; this not only eliminated the threat but also gave her an unforeseen advantage in the struggle against Ground, as its rival's territory had now been greatly diminished. Currently, it is just a matter of time before Gorge chokes Ground away from the caves and turns them into a realm of pure dark water, where the Master shall reign supreme...

THE DISAPPEARANCES

Recently, there have been rumours about people disappearing near the Haunted Lake. Young Morudhain people, as well as casual travellers, are disappearing when they come near the lake; local superstition attribute it to the unnatural curses of the place, though nobody has actually investigated it – mainly out of fear.

Chapter Sections

Earth and Water begins the moment the Player Characters march to the Drowned Mines, be it from the Haunted Lake access or from the upper passage at **Area C**. The adventure proper takes place almost entirely inside **Area E**, ending when the Player

EARTH AND WATER

Characters have dealt with Gorge, Ground and the Master to their satisfaction. Adventure sections include the following:

Introduction: This part of the adventure should be used only if the Player Characters returned to Meadowvale after **Chapter One** or are playing **Chapter Two** as a separate scenario. There are no encounters in this section; it is intended only to give the Player Characters the hook of the Haunted Lake disappearances.

The Haunted Lake: In this part of the adventure, the Player Characters are expected to reach the Haunted Lake and use it to enter the mines. They may find the ghost that haunts the lake and, perhaps, discover the disappearances are not its fault.

The Drowned Mines: This section is the bulk of the adventure, where Player Characters face the elementals Ground and Gorge and the true culprit of the Haunted Lake disappearances – the creature known as The Master.

Introduction

The Player Characters arrive at Meadowvale, where they hear rumours about the Haunted Lake disappearance and are probably asked to do something about it. While the Player Characters remain in Meadowvale, use the town information found in page 9 of *The Dragon Stone* and page 8 of this book.

THE MISSION

Here is where the Player Characters may get the mission to explore the Drowned Mines; the disappearances in the Haunted Lake have stirred up quite a few people so it should not be difficult to get the information.

MEADOWVALE RUMOURS (CHAPTER TWO)

Check result	Information obtained
10 or higher	People have been vanishing up at the Haunted Lake... no surprise of course...
15 or higher	Them dwarves at the Stonehold fortress are looking for hired hands... must be delicate business if they would descend to dealing with us humans, ay?
20 or higher	Something over at the Haunted Lake is killing or stealing the people that go there, mostly young lovers, innocent travellers and the like. I'd bet on the ghost, of course; everybody knows there has been a ghost in the Haunted Lake for many years...
25 or higher	There is no ghost at the Haunted Lake; baseless legends, those are. However, there <i>is</i> something inside the mountain, killing people off or worse – my guess is it comes from inside the Mount. All the evil in these lands comes from inside the Mount...

GATHERING INFORMATION

If the Player Characters make Gather Information checks during this introduction to **Chapter Two**, substitute the information from the **Meadowvale Rumours** table (see page 10) with the information on the **Meadowvale Rumours** (Chapter Two), see below.

Other than this table, describe the town with its typical encounters, shops and Non-Player Characters as described on pages 9-14 of *The Dragon Stone* and page 8 of this book. The Meadowvale citizens make no mention of Aedhaine's Tribe, the Church of Iri's Moru Expedition or the Goblin invasion, unless the Games Master specifically wishes to get his players involved with the rest of the campaign beyond **Earth and Water**.

ALDILLAN'S STORY

There is a young farmer in Meadowvale, called Aldillan, who lost the use of both legs during a farming accident. Aldillan's family arranged for him to be married to Scanna, a town girl that was full of life and joy, expecting she would cheer his life a bit. Contrary to what everybody expected, Scanna grew increasingly unhappy, as her husband was unable to give her pleasure or children; neighbours started gossiping about their constant fighting, calling Scanna and Aldillan 'different as earth and water'. Tied to a cripple in her prime, doomed to never bear children, Scanna backed out on the whole business. The desire to be a mother and to be free burned her soul too deeply and, scared of social pressure, she fled the town towards the north-western wasteland. She had the intention of heading for the Haunted Lake and look for a new life among the settlements around it; at least, that was what her goodbye note to Aldillan said. Now, Aldillan fears her wife might have stumbled onto whatever is kidnapping people around the Haunted Lake; he feels mortally worried because of the danger his wife might be in but, more

Chapter Guide: Earth and Water

This is one of the shortest chapters in the campaign, consisting only of **Area E** and its dangers; this is partly to allow the Player Characters to ‘rest’ from the ordeal of facing the Goblin God and cleaning the Fortress with a relatively easier adventure. However, the dangers found here are also quite sufficient to give Player Characters a hard time – particularly the Master and its forces.

Expected Character Level: Before beginning this chapter, Player Characters should be 4th or 5th level. Lower-level characters are well advised to adventure a bit more before entering the mines; higher-level characters should enter the mountain at a later point, as indicated in the **Chapter Guide** sidebar of each of the following chapters.

PLAYING EARTH AND WATER AS A SEPARATE ADVENTURE

To run **Earth and Water** as a separate scenario, consider it a short dungeon adventure for 4th to 5th level characters. To introduce Player Characters directly to this chapter, start the adventure as normal (see **The Road Begins**, page 8), making particular emphasis on rumours and gossip about the haunted lake with its recent disappearances and the mystery of the dwarves’ presence near the Mount. Unless the Games Master wants to get his players involved with the rest of the campaign later on, it is a good idea to eschew all references to Aedhaine’s tribe, their disappearance or the Temple of Iri’s Moru expedition, as well as to the Goblin Fortress or the Stormcloud Army; the Meadowvale Non-Player Characters say nothing about any disappeared Morudhain and the Temple of Iri clerics have no mission to give the Player Characters.

Character Hooks

If playing **Earth and Water** separately, use one of the following options to hook the characters into the adventure:

- The Player Characters received news that the dwarves from the Stonehold Fortress are looking for a few good men to undertake a hazardous mission inside Mount Moru – only this time, the mission is not to scout the Goblin Fortress but the lost mines. The dwarves want an adventuring party to search the mines and clean them of dangers; otherwise, run the encounter with the dwarves as described in the **Stonehold** section (page 15), allowing the dwarves to be more flexible when speaking about their mine to strangers, if only to get their help in claiming it back.
- The Player Characters have heard rumours about the disappearances near the Haunted Lake and are interested in – or paid for – investigating them.
- At least one of the Player Characters is a dwarf from Stonehold, sent by his people to scout the Drowned Mines. In this case, the remaining Player Characters may, at the Games Master’s discretion, be considered friends of the Stonehold dwarves, which would grant them the right to enter the dwarven fortress without any additional diplomatic effort.

Adapting the Adventure Further

When running **Earth and Water** independently, apply the following modifications to the main story:

- Remove Aurelia (page 11), Cormac Drake (page 12), Rann Shieldborne (page 13) and The Wolf/Aurebaor (page 14) from the adventure.
- The dwarves at Stonehold are more willing to share information about their lost mines and even give the mission of scouting them to trustworthy-looking adventurers, so as to give Player Characters an additional optional hook to explore the Mountain. Make the necessary modifications to the encounter described in the **Stonehold** section (page 15).
- Whether to block the accesses to **Areas A** and **B** or not is left to the Games Master’s discretion.
- If the Games Master wishes to leave the options to explore **Area A** and **Area B** open, encourage the Player Characters to enter the mountain through the Haunted Lake and make sure Stonehold dwarves are more worried about their mines than about dealing with the goblins.
- The accesses to **Area C** and **Area F** (located at **E1** and **E18** respectively) are flooded off, leading nowhere, unless the Games Master wishes to run the rest of the campaign later on.

than anything, he wants someone to bring her back so she can face punishment for leaving him so callously. He is willing to pay 500 gold pieces (everything he has) for any information about Scanna's fate; if he hears about a party of adventurers intent on investigating the disappearances, he immediately seeks them out to offer them the mission. He makes a strong emphasis in that Scanna 'be brought back to face justice for her mistreatment; I do not care if she is happily bearing a Morudhain warrior's litter or in the clutches of a mountain creature – just bring her back to me. Please.'

THE DROWNED BRIDE

The legend of the Drowned Bride (*The Dragon Stone*, page 13) is well known by many Meadowvale citizens; if the Player Characters ask specifically about the Haunted Lake's background, a simple Gather Information check (DC 20) should allow them to find someone that knows the full story as recounted in *The Dragon Stone*.

The Haunted Lake

The so-called Haunted Lake is actually the union of two lakes, one at the base of Mount Moru and another on a ravine 3,000 feet above ground level, interconnected via a fast-flowing spring scattered with waterfalls. The upper lake is fed by the floods and underground water sprouts coming from the Drowned Mines (dungeon area E); the lower loch is much larger and quieter, besides being much better known. The Haunted Lake is known for a series of ghost stories and reports of supernatural events associated with it, particularly the popular tale of the Drowned Bride. Now that the disappearances near it have become common knowledge, most people have stopped approaching the Lake – except for curious adventurers...

THE CLIMB

The creek that feeds the lower loch also indicates the path to the upper lake. Reaching the upper lake requires a full day of following the creek up the mountain just to reach the base of the great waterfall; from there, travellers must climb the mountain wall beside the waterfall, which requires a successful Climb check (DC 25).

ENCOUNTERS

There is a 10% chance of a mountain encounter every hour the Player Characters spend climbing the mountain; use the **Random Encounter Table**

for Outer Mount Moru (found in page 58 of *The Dragon Stone*), substituting any encounter above EL 6 with an encounter with The Ghost (see below).

THE UPPER LAKE

After the climb, Player Characters arrive to the upper lake, which connects directly to the filthy underground lake at **Area E16**. To reach **E16** from the upper lake, it is necessary to cross the water, which normally requires swimming, until coming out at **E16** on the other side.

BESTING

There are several good places to rest along the climb to the upper lake, allowing Player Characters to take their time and recover their strength while ascending.

THE GHOST

The Drowned Bride's ghost does indeed haunt the lake; she may appear to Player Characters if they roll an encounter with her on the **Random Encounter Table for Outer Mount Moru**, or if they dawdle near the upper lake too long. If the Player Characters encounter the ghost, use her background and statistics as given in page 13 of *The Dragon Stone*.

DEVELOPMENT

The ghost only wants one thing – to hear convincing words of true love. She asks all male Player Characters



that cross her path to give her words of true love; she will not leave them alone until they speak to her or leave the vicinity of the lake. To say something that will fulfil her high standards, a Player Character needs to succeed on a Perform (oratory) check (DC 20) or a Bluff check (DC 25). As soon as she does hear the words she longs for, the ghost disappears forever, finally satisfied after decades of unlife. If the words sound forced, rushed or insincere, the ghost attacks.

FROM HERE

From this section, it is generally expected for Player Characters to continue into **Area E** (through the pond at **E16**).

The Drowned Mines

The Drowned Mines have been a little more than a damp graveyard for the last 20 years, ever since the flood that destroyed the dwarves' operation. Stonehold sent some expeditions to recover gold and tools but they were mostly unsuccessful; in any event, the mines are still an abandoned, desolate and dangerous place, still far away from ever being put to work again.

While the Player Characters remain in The Drowned Mines, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area E: The Drowned Mines**, as detailed in page 28 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

ENTERING THE MINES

There are two ways to enter the mines: If the Player Characters have dealt with – or at least passed through – the Goblin Fortress described in **Chapter One**, they may enter through the upper passages leading to **Area E1**; otherwise, they may take the direct entrance from the Haunted Lake outside Mount Moru (see previous section); this passage leads to **Area E16**.

THE MISSION

If the Player Characters come by request of the Stonehold dwarves, their mission is to ascertain the dangers still existing in the mines and do something about them if possible; alternatively, it is possible they are here investigating the disappearances at the Haunted Lake, in which case their mission is to find the missing people or, at least, whoever or whatever took them. Otherwise, it is likely the Player Characters are just passing through on their way to the lower levels; if such is the case, their mission consists simply of surviving long enough to find the exit passage at **E18**.

GROUND AND GORGE

The two quarrelling elemental spirits, Ground and Gorge, can still be found in the mines. Gorge is hatefully satisfied with the current situation – its dark waters keep expanding through the mines and its monstrous ally, the Master, keeps killing and enslaving all the intruders to its caves. However, Ground is very worried, not only because its precious dry land is diminishing every day to Gorge's invading waters but also because, if Gorge wins, the Master will be the sole ruler of the mines, which shall turn the entire area into a realm of evil and darkness. Gorge does not hesitate to attack and kill any visitors to its cave, while Ground simply hides and hopes for the best.

GROUND'S PLEA

Circumstances being what they are, Ground has been driven to desperation, to such an extent that it will even consider dealing directly with mortals to help it stop Gorge and the Master. If a particularly trusty-looking party – one that makes a visible, significant display of respect for the earth or includes a druid, dwarf or gnome among its members – enters its chambers at **E4**, Ground comes out of its hiding place, which it had rarely done before, to try and communicate with them. Sadly, Gorge cannot speak any language other than Terran, though it does its best to make the visitors see he does not like the water and they should march east to deal with the source of evil in the mines. He can doodle on the ground to make itself understood and show the gold it can offer as a reward for any help.

THE PRISONERS

The Master is indeed responsible for the recent disappearances around the Haunted Lake; he sent his fish slaves (see page 28 in *The Path of Archaneroth*) to look for hapless victims and bring them back to his lair so they can serve as breeding material for more fish-slaves. Currently there are four humans, three women and one man, kept prisoner at **Area E9**. Most of the prisoners have been systematically forced to mate with the Master's slaves; there were also another two prisoners but they died horribly during the breeding process. Of course, the survivors have been forever marked by such horrid experiences. If the Player Characters rescue these captives, they get mixed reactions from them. These are the Master's captives:

Aeghad (Male 1st level human warrior) is a Morudhain hunter from the Griffon Tribe, who firmly

believes he has been brought to Hell. He was already forced to mate with a female fish-slave, which he shall never forget; when he sees the Player Characters, he mistakes them for disguised demons come to torture him further. It may require a bit of fighting to subdue him and convince him he is safe.

Baehlin (Female 1st Level Human Commoner) is a young Morudhain woman from the Griffon Tribe, still a virgin but soon to be given to the fish-slaves for breeding. Despite the horror of her situation, she has kept her cool, unlike her mother (see below). She begs the Player Characters to get all of the captives out of here before more fish-slaves arrive and capture the Player Characters as well.

Maeghun (Female 2nd Level Human Commoner), a middle-aged yet physically healthy Morudhain woman, is Baehlin's mother; her first contact with the fish-slaves turned her irrevocably, barking mad. She cannot be saved; nothing short of a *heal* spell will restore her sanity. She refuses to go with the Player Characters and may become a nuisance during a rescue, risking the lives of everybody else with her screams and struggling.

Scanna (Female 1st Level Human Commoner), the former wife of a Meadowvale farmer, fled her crippled, impotent husband looking for a better life where she could be free and bear children like a normal woman. Her wish has been fulfilled in the darkest, worst fashion imaginable, as she has already been impregnated with the seed of a fish-slave. Within days, maybe hours, a clutch of baby fish slaves shall punch their way out of her, quite probably killing her in the process. Half mad with terror and pain, yet sane enough to know her time has come, she begs the Player Characters to kill her now and spare her further torment; if necessary, she argues that carrying her will endanger the lives of the other captives. If the Player Characters still decide to help her, a *remove disease* or *heal* spell cast within 12 hours will stop the impregnation of baby fish but cause 2d6 points of damage from internal bleeding. Otherwise, in approximately one day she will give birth to a clutch of baby fish-slaves (non-combatants), indeed dying in the process.

THE NEW MANAGEMENT

Two ooze mephits, Gaggaloog-who-is-so-incredibly-efficient-tasks-are-afraid-of-him and Googallagawag-tough-as-rock-and-swift-as-water, have settled in the old mine manager's office (**Area E13**). They wish to get their hands on as much as the mine's remaining

gold as possible; if they find out about the Player Characters and their mission, they actively seek them out and attempt to propose a business plan:

THE MEPHITS' PLAN

The mephits have studied old mine plans and explored the entire mine thoroughly, except for the Master's area (they do not even know the Master exists). Furthermore, they have superficial knowledge about the situation between Ground and Gorge; in any event, they think they know enough about the subject to realise that the elementals' deaths are all they need to get their hands on the mine's loot without any interference. Lacking the power to attempt it themselves, they intend to use the Player Characters for the job. In exchange for one-half of the treasure the Player Characters obtain, Gaggaloog-who-is-so-incredibly-efficient-tasks-are-afraid-of-him and Googallagawag-tough-as-rock-and-swift-as-water offer a complete, accurate map of the mines, indicating the dangers to be found and how to deal with them – according to the mephits' knowledge: that is, the map does not include **Areas E8-E10** or **E17**. If the Player Characters accept, the mephits are sure they will clean out the mines, share the loot and leave the area free of dangers for further exploration. Regardless of whether the Player Characters accept or not, the mephits make sure of telling them where to find both Ground and Gorge; plus, they spare no effort to convince the Player Characters of how evil and dangerous the two elementals are.

THE TRAPPED PASSAGES

If the Player Characters fall in one of the traps at **E11**, it is possible they remain trapped indefinitely, without any means of ever going out. If this is the case, the Games Master may have Gaggaloog-who-is-so-incredibly-efficient-tasks-are-afraid-of-him and Googallagawag-tough-as-rock-and-swift-as-water go and help the Player Characters out of the trap – of course, the price would be for the Player Characters to 'do a small favour' to the mephits...

The Master

The Pond Master, an old evil aboleth, is the true ruler of the Drowned Mines; he lives below his dark pond at **E17**. The Master knows quite a bit about Mount Moru and its depths, as he has inherited the knowledge of generations upon generations of dark creatures of the depths just like him. His only goal is to breed a force of fish-slaves large enough to take over the mines and then the upper and lower levels of Mount Moru, so as to one day control the fabled

realms of magic and wealth found at the lower levels. The Master controls dozens of fish-slaves that freely come and go through the Drowned Mines; these slaves are the Master's eyes, ears and claws, ensuring nothing escapes their ruler's reach.

DEVELOPMENT

If the Master's fish-slaves see the Player Characters and successfully return to warn him about it, or if the captives at **E9** are rescued, the Master immediately sends a sizeable force of fish-slaves (2d4 skum) with specific orders to capture the Player Characters and bring them back to him at **E17**. If his fish-slaves fail, the Master prefers to wait and see if the Player Characters come on their own rather than wasting more valuable servants on useless errands.

If the Player Characters find a way to safely interrogate the Pond Master, he may tell them what he knows about the levels below – he fully knows the entire contents of dungeon areas **I** (The Resting Place) and **N** (The Lightless Depths); he also knows that the largest remaining Athan ruins are 'below The Deep Caves' (**Area H**) and 'somewhere beyond the lightless depths' (**Area O**), although he has never been to these places and does not know their exact contents or even how to get there.

DEFEATING THE MASTER

If the Player Characters defeat the Pond Master, his fish-slaves scatter to the four winds, lacking any control or purpose. They barely fight back if attacked, not sure whether to stand and fight or flee from the threat.

EXPLORING THE MINES

Half of the Drowned Mines are completely inundated with filthy, stale dark water; therefore, many encounters in the area are underwater. The Games Master should find ways to suggest the Player Characters prepare for sub-aquatic combat, such as describing the area as 'almost as much water as land' or having the prisoners at **E9** warn them about the underwater dangers of the area.

RESTING

Area E4, the only place of the mines beyond the reach of Gorge and the Master, is an excellent place for the party to rest and recover their strength. Once the Master and Gorge have been dealt with, the entire area is good to rest, although random encounters may still apply at the Game Master's discretion.

EXITING AREA E

There are three exits from the Drowned Mines: The north tunnel leading to **Area C (E1)**, the lake leading outside (**E16**) and the hidden exit to **Area F (E18)**.

Ending the Chapter

Chapter Two ends when the Player Characters exit the Drowned Mines having fulfilled the mission that brought them here, be it finding the culprit of the Haunted Lake disappearances, dealing with the dangers of the mines or simply finding the exit to **E18**.

Player Characters should have reached 6th level by the end of this chapter, after they receive all story XP awards; if they have not, the Games Master should try and encourage them to explore the mines further so they can have a few more encounters and/or tie any loose ends. Potential hooks for the Player Characters to continue exploring the mines include:

- Was the Master found? Was he defeated?
- Was the struggle between the elementals dealt with? Did the Player Characters take sides? Did they do anything to help their side?
- Were the Master's human captives rescued and brought back safely outside?
- Were the two mephits found? Were they left to their own devices?
- Did the Player Characters know or discover this was a dwarven mine?

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

The end of Chapter Two depends largely on the actions of the Player Characters; specifically, on whether they kill Gorge, Ground or the Master:

- If the Player Characters kill Ground and let the Master live (regardless of whether Gorge lives or not), the mines indeed become a dark place, full of monsters and horror; human disappearances continue and the Master's slave army grows until someone arrives to deal with it.
- If the Player Characters kill Ground and let Gorge live (regardless of whether the Master dies or not), the mines become fully flooded in a few weeks; next time the Player Characters go there, they find the Haunted Lake has now buried the entire area, extending from **E16** to **E1** and **E18**.
- If the Player Characters kill Gorge and let Ground live, the caves slowly dry again. After a month, flooded areas are just muddy; after a few weeks

more, the entire caves are completely dry, as if there had never been water there. If the Master still lives, he has to retreat to lower levels again, as these caves are no longer fit for him to live in.

- If the Player Characters let both Gorge and Ground live, things continue as they are for a few months, until eventually – probably the following year or so – Ground is driven out of the area and the caves are entirely flooded. If the Master was slain, they eventually become a serene underground lake; having lost the reason to fight and the Master’s evil influence, Gorge becomes a quiet, peaceful spirit, in harmony with itself and the world around it.
- If the Player Characters kill Ground, Gorge and the Master, the caves remain as they are in state and spirit – a haunted yet quiet place, which shall eventually be overtaken by some other creature from Mount Moru or decay to dust.
- If Gaggaloog-who-is-so-incredibly-efficient-tasks-are-afraid-of-him and Googallagawag-tough-as-rock-and-swift-as-water are alive at the end, they are eventually driven away from the mines by whoever is left in charge – Ground, Gorge or the Master. If the Player Characters get rid of the Master *and* both the elementals, the mephits take all the gold they can and retire to enjoy their newfound wealth elsewhere.

If the Player Characters had a specific mission in the Drowned Mines, they might want to return and report their success or failure.

MEADOWVALE AND THE MORUDHAIN LANDS

- If the Player Characters return to Meadowvale with information about the captives’ fates, the Meadowvale Township gives them 1d4x100 gold pieces, as thanks for their efforts. If they give news about Scanna’s death, Aldillan anyway pays them the 500 gp he offered for her return, solemnly declaring he ‘forgives her’.
- If the Player Characters return with proof of having found and slain the Master, they are given an additional 3,000 gold pieces – the just reward for true heroes.
- If the Player Characters save Scanna and return her alive and well to her husband, he looks at her and discovers something new – she has looked upon the abyss of madness and kept its stare; he will never be able to look her in the eye again. She mated with monsters and, in doing so, became one herself in his eyes. Having discovered he had her brought back for nothing, Aldillan pays the

Player Characters the 500 gp he offered for her return and retires to spend the rest of his life in lonely bitterness; Scanna goes to live as a nun in the Last Shrine, where they will help her forget – and hopefully, heal – the horror she went through; however, the buoyant, lively girl she was has died forever.

- If the Player Characters return at least one of the Morudhain captives to Griffon Tribe lands, they are given 100 gp (the Morudhain cannot give much more) as thanks, together with the trust – if not the friendship – of the Griffon Tribe.

STONEHOLD

- If the Player Characters return to Stonehold with useful information about the mines’ dangers, the dwarves give them 1,000 gold pieces for their effort.
- If the Player Characters return with proof of having found and slain the Master, they are given an additional 1,500 gold pieces as a bonus.
- Regardless of whether the mission is successful or not, the dwarves recognise the danger of attempting to settle in Mount Moru and decide to wait things out, being content with the ore they have already recovered and postponing their full retaking of the Drowned Mines until someone else cleans Mount Moru of its taint and makes it safe to live there again. However, if they end in friendly terms with the Player Characters, their city remains a good place to visit for rest and recovery between adventures.

REWARDS

Besides the monetary payments indicated above, the Player Characters may keep whatever loot they find in the mines – which is quite a bit, particularly if they slew Ground and/or Gorge.

Story Experience Awards

Give the Player Characters 3,500 experience points if they killed the Master or drove him away, plus 1,500 experience points if they permanently solved the struggle between Ground and Gorge in any fashion. Give them an extra 150 experience points for each human captive rescued and taken safely out of the mines, plus 2,000 experience points if they manage to save Scanna’s life. Give them an extra 150 experience points for each captive taken safely back home. Finally, an extra 2,000 experience points are in order if the Player Characters manage to give eternal peace to the Drowned Bride ghost.

HEARTS OF FLAME

Do you LOVE me, hag?

The Player Characters reach the Fire Pits, a region of the dungeon where an evil spirit from the plane of fire reigns supreme. This spirit is the she-efreet Saitara Sakhija, an extraplanar queen that settled on the mortal world to organise a contest among three monstrous witches. The Player Characters have to deal with this contest and its deadly participants if they want to get out of the Fire Pits alive.

The heart of the Genie

Saitara Sakhija Bint Shabdazim, princess of the Bronze Heart, was a well-known noble from the fabled City of Brass, in the Elemental Plane of Fire. For her perversions and dishonourable behaviour, she was sentenced to the Bottle – the worst punishment imaginable for an efreet – and sent to the mortal plane to serve lesser beings for 1,001 years. However, armed with her wit and charm, Saitara had no problem to seduce her first master into wishing her freedom, after which she, of course, slew the poor sod. Now free to do as she will in the mortal world, she gave herself to a life of luxury and debauchery, indulging in more and more forbidden pleasures until she decided to go to Hell just for the fun of it.

THE SEARCH

Travelling around the land and questioning weak-willed sages, Saitara quickly learned that Mount Moru was regarded as an entrance to Hell by arcane authorities and local folklore; therefore, she endeavoured to visit the mountain and explore its depths. Using her arcane powers, she directly entered the mountain base (**Area I**) and simply went deeper and deeper into the Mount Moru underground, until she reached the very end of the earth – the Lightless Depths (**Area N**), under which only Hell existed. Unaware of the ArchanerOTH access (see page 77), Saitara did not know how to continue down into Hell from here; therefore, she asked around the depths, looking for somebody that knew.

THE HAG

During her search for an access into Hell, Saitara stumbled upon a woman of unearthly beauty, who called herself Adria and claimed to be an immortal spirit, doomed to wander the entrance of Hell forever. Saitara was instantly smitten with love for the lost

spirit and stayed with her, promising they would find an exit together. Adria then said that, by the terms of Hell's curse, either of them would be able to enter Hell if somebody else would willingly sacrifice their heart for her. Saitara suggested they both give their hearts to each other, so they would both be free to enter Hell together. Adria agreed and pulled out Saitara's heart from her chest, at the same time revealing her true identity – she was not a beautiful immortal spirit but Achrida, the mad night hag that had been trapped in the Lightless Depths when the Gods erected the Travelling Seal (see page 76) around Mount Moru. When she revealed her awful, true form, Saitara was transfixed with horror and pain – but it was too late... 'Your heart is mine now!' Achrida howled hatefully.

THE DEAL

As Achrida held Saitara's heart, she revealed how a night hag's life-force is tied to a gem, called a *heartstone*. Since Achrida had become trapped in the Lightless Depths, she had had no opportunity to replace her *heartstone* with such a powerful, fresh energy source. She would use Saitara's heart as her new *heartstone*, and destroy it, killing Saitara in the process, if she ever tried to take it back. However, she gave the she-efreet a faint shred of hope: if Saitara ever found another hag, a witch of such evil and power her heart could replace Saitara's own, she could take this hag's heart and seek Achrida again, who would gladly replace Saitara's heart in return. Having no way to reply or strike back at Achrida, Saitara left for the surface again, completely defenceless, in an abyss of despair so great, so abysmal, only an immortal's soul would understand it.

THE CONTEST

When Saitara regained her bearings, after months of aimlessly wandering the land, she decided to try and win back her heart. She sought hags, the wickedest witches far and wide, and chose the three that to her mind seemed more ruthless and cruel, three monstrous witches without a smidgen of good in their soul. She went to each of these witches separately and promised them power – the power of an immortal genie. She then led them back to Mount Moru, where she told them they had been chosen for their skills, power and ruthlessness and that one of them would have the chance to become her acolyte and partake of her godlike might – the one that won Saitara's contest.

THE RULES

The contest has the following specifications: each hag must use her *disguise self* ability, combined with her natural wiles, charm or plain sneaky ruthlessness, to seduce a male of the humanoid or giant type and make him fall in love with her. However, this love must not be a healthy, mutually committed relation; the man has to be turned into a completely adoring, defenceless slave, so deep in love that he is ready to willingly give his heart to the hag – which is exactly what she is expected to obtain. Saitara's contest has the hags competing with each other to see who among them gathers the most enamoured hearts within a year, after which the winner shall become Saitara's apprentice.

THE CONTESTANTS

These are the three witches that Saitara sought and recruited for her contest:

Serella: A rough and tough rustic green hag from a backwater bayou cave, Serella is a typical hardy female, with no social grace at all but enough inner drive and stubbornness to accomplish anything she sets to do. When using her *disguise self* ability to seduce men, she often assumes the appearance of a 'country girl', wilful and domineering but full of the simple charm of rusticity. Her strategy has already yielded the heart of a first victim – a curious adventurer that wanted to have an 'adventure' in the dungeon; at least he got his wish. Serella may win the contest because of her hard-headedness and direct approach to tasks, which make her accomplish her goals hard and fast.

Eannha: A bitter and rude annis, she was chosen for her utterly black heart, more utterly devoid of compassion and good feelings even than that of Saitara herself. Eannha entered the contest with the least chance of winning, as her Large size limits her disguise options and, contrary to her opponents, she cannot cast *disguise self* at will but only three times per day. However, she has already gathered the willing hearts of two trolls and is already seducing a third victim – Bunch Bigbelch, the hill giant at **Area F11**. This puts Eannha ahead the other two contestants, despite her handicap. Eannha may win the contest because of her utter lack of scruples; she will balk at no action, however low or disgusting, to achieve victory.

Asaerpe: The last contestant stands out for being not a hag, but a lamia – not as ugly as her opponents but definitely much more monstrous. Asaerpe's angle is her insight into manipulation of the opposite sex; she has always had a methodical, professional approach to

seduction, which could not harm her chances to win the contest. Asaerpe was the first contestant to acquire a heart, having already seduced and killed her first victim while on the road to Mount Moru. Then, she charmed another victim – a hapless ogre just passing through the tunnels. Asaerpe may win the contest because of her experience, her *charm monster* ability and her wisdom-draining touch, which give her a clear advantage.

THE GOAL

Of course, Saitara does not plan to give even a fraction of her power to anyone – as soon as the contest ends, Saitara plans to take the 'winner' down to Achrida's lair and give the heart of her 'apprentice' in exchange for her own. Until then, Saitara is just biding her time and, strangely and sickly enough, enjoying the mayhem and sheer amount of heartbreak caused by the whole situation.

Chapter Sections

This chapter may begin two ways. If the Player Characters left Mount Moru after Chapter Two or **Hearts of Flame** is being played as a separate adventure, run the introductory encounter **The Heart of Jon the Bold**; if the Player Characters went straight to **Area F** after Chapter Two, proceed directly to **The Fire Pits** section. These are the sections that make up this chapter:

The Heart of Jon the Bold: This is an optional introductory encounter in case the Player Characters need a hook to enter the adventure. Here they may get a mission to investigate the death of a local ranger and its relation to Saitara's grisly contest.

The Fire Pits: In this section the Player Characters enter **Area F**, where they encounter Saitara and her terrible contest; they may or may not do something to stop it.

The Heart of Jon the Bold

This section has the Player Characters stumbling upon a murder during a caravan travel across the Moru Country. Start at this section only if **Hearts of Flame** is being played as an independent adventure or the Player Characters left Mount Moru after Chapter Two. If the Player Characters went directly to **Area F** after Chapter Two, proceed instead to **The Fire Pits**, below.

Chapter Guide: Hearts of Flame

Of all the chapters of the main campaign, **Hearts of Flame** is the one having less to do with the main storyline; the entire chapter is fairly self-contained, with a complex story of its own that at the same time has virtually no ties to **The Blood of Dragons** as a saga.

Expected Character Level: Before beginning this chapter, Player Characters should be at least 6th level. Lower-level characters are well advised to adventure a bit more before entering The Fire Pits; higher-level characters should enter the mountain at a later point, as indicated in the **Chapter Guide** sidebar of each of the following chapters.

PLAYING HEARTS OF FLAME AS A SEPARATE ADVENTURE

Hearts of Flame can be played as a separate dungeon scenario for 6th to 7th level characters. To introduce Player Characters directly to this chapter, use the introductory encounter **The Heart of Jon the Bold** (see below).

Character Hooks

If playing **Hearts of Flame** separately, use one of the following options to hook the characters into the adventure:

- The Player Characters are travelling with Thyrdan Umble's Caravan (see **The Heart of Jon the Bold**, below), either as paid caravan guards or as simple passengers intent on crossing the Moru Country.
- The Player Characters were friends of Jon the Bold and received a letter from him, urging them to come visit him at the Morudhain Lands so they could meet his 'beloved'. Finding him dead should be more than enough to get them interested in investigating.

ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE FURTHER

When running **Hearts of Flame** independently, apply the following modifications to the main story:

- Make the passage from **Area F17** a wider, more visible entrance; the Moru Path (see page 19) leads to this passage instead of the Entrance Caves, allowing Player Characters to enter **Area F** directly from outside.
- The passages at **F17**, **F18** and **F19** lead to closed volcanic rock caves like the ones at **F1**; the pit at **F15** leads nowhere, being actually a true, impenetrable fire pit. If the Games Master wishes to leave these passages open, it is highly recommended he runs the entire **Blood of Dragons** campaign instead.
- Remove the special clues at **F6** and **F14**, substituting these areas with plain volcanic rock caves like the ones at **F1**.
- Saitara does not try to deal with the Player Characters to get her heart back (see page 44); if she is defeated, she simply offers her services as an efreet but nothing more.

THE MISSION

In this section, the Player Character's mission is likely to track the 'creature' to Mount Moru or, if they were not interested in investigating Jon's death, simply returning to Mount Moru to continue their adventure there. In any event, as soon as the Player Characters arrive to Mount Moru and the **Area F** entrance, proceed to the next section.

A CARAVAN TRIP

The adventure starts with the Player Characters travelling on or alongside a caravan across the Morudhain Lands. The caravan leader is Thyrdan Umble, a rich merchant from Meadowvale who is just

starting on a trip to sell his wares from one border of the country to the other. If the Player Characters already finished Chapter Two, assume they hitched the ride with Umble's caravan to return to Mount Moru and continue their adventures; otherwise, use one of the character hooks suggested in the **Chapter Guide** section, above.

WARES

Thyrdan Umble has all the items shown in Chapter Seven of the *Player's Handbook* for sale in his caravan; if the Player Characters have money to spend and wish to make a few purchases during the trip, they are more than welcome to do so.

JON THE BOLD

Jon the Bold was a young ranger from the Morudhain Lands; although not of Morudhain blood himself, he had managed the rare feat of earning the Morudhain's respect and goodwill due to his survival skills and to many favours he did for the local Morudhain tribes. He lived alone in the wilderness, travelling from one Morudhain village to the other to sell the food he hunted in exchange for tools and other goods. If the Player Characters were already his friends, they knew Jon as a gentle, quiet and surprisingly skilful man.

NEMALA

During the past few weeks, Jon had met a lovely woman in the wasteland; she appeared to be lost and diseased, requiring immediate assistance. Jon had taken her home and seemingly nursed her back to health; he also fell in love with her. The maiden, who called herself Nemala, lived a passionate romance with Jon for many days, until he was so much in love he was ready to give his pulsating heart and die for her. Three days later, his freshly dead body was found by Morudhain scouts from a neighbouring tribe. The corpse had no marks or wounds – except for a large, bleeding hole where Jon's heart had been.

ASAERPE

Obviously, the pretended 'Nemala' was not a true mortal maiden but Asaerpe, one of the contestants for the title of Saitara Sakhija's apprentice. Her seduction and murder of Jon the Bold was the first score in the contest, even before the contestants arrived to Mount Moru.

THE FUNERAL

The Player Characters become involved with the adventure upon reaching the Morudhain village where the body of Jon the Bold has just been discovered. If the Player Characters are using the character hook that assumed they were Jon's friends, they had been given the directions to this village to find their friend; otherwise, their stumbling upon the funeral is mere coincidence. In any event, surely the Player Characters did not expect to find Jon the Bold being prepared for burial.

CLUES

The embalming and spiritual rites required to prepare a body for burial require several days of work; during this time, Morudhain scouts make occasional rounds to investigate the causes of Jon's death. The Player Characters may help with the scouting if they wish; scouring the entire area requires at least one day of

A Morudhain Funeral

The horns and bagpipes boom in the calm wasteland wind as they lower Jon's white-clad body to his grave and cover it with a ritual mound. No Morudhain cries; no Morudhain expresses anything but stern fixation on the embalmed body as the lid to his coffin is closed and the first rocks are piled over it. As the shaman chants his deathsong, you cannot help but imagine Jon cannot care for any of this – he has no heart...

scouting and a successful Survival check (DC 20). A couple of days before the funeral, either the Morudhain or the Player Characters will have discovered the tracks of a monstrous creature, perhaps a tiger or lion from the Moru Hills, heading to Mount Moru from the vicinity of the spot where Jon died. This may seem strange, as most natural predators do not chew out their victim's hearts; however, stranger things have been seen in the world, particularly in the Moru Country. The Morudhain believe this beast killed Jon and carried his woman away to eat her elsewhere. Since neither the beast nor the maiden are anywhere to be found, they assume the beast carried her really far away, perhaps as far as Mount Moru itself. The general decision is to wait for Jon's funeral, then organise a party to stalk the creature and kill it before it claims more victims. Of course, if the Player Characters volunteer to do this, the Morudhain agree, glad they do not have to send their own kin to their possible deaths.

TO MOUNT MORU

The trip to Mount Moru from the Morudhain village takes about a week through the harsh rocky hills of the Morudhain Lands; two weeks if the Player Characters make an effort to follow the tracks during the entire trip.

TRACKING THE CREATURE

Successfully following the tracks requires a successful Survival check (DC 27). Increase the DC by 5 if the Player Characters wish to march at their normal speed while following the tracks; increase it by 3 if they attempt to follow the trail during the night, unless the character making the check has low-light vision or darkvision. If the Survival check result surpasses the DC by 5 or more, the Player Characters may ascertain the creature killed and fed on several animals during its trip, yet it did not kill a woman, or any humanoid being for that matter. Furthermore, the check reveals the creature did not carry the body of any living thing, which means that, whatever happened to Nemala, the

creature was not responsible – or it hid the tracks of the kill incredibly well.

THE TRIP

For every hour the Player Characters spend travelling to mount Moru, there is a 5% chance of a random encounter; to determine the exact creature encountered, roll on the **Random Encounter Table for the Morudhain Lands** (see page 57 in *The Dragon Stone*), using the daytime or night time table depending on whether it is day or night when the encounter happens. Any encounter with an EL above 8, or any lamia encounter, should be rerolled; there can be no more than one encounter per day.

THE ENTRANCE

If the Player Characters successfully tracked Asaerpe back to Mount Moru, her tracks lead them directly to the outside entrance connecting to the passage at **Area F17**, three hours after the beginning of the Moru Path (see page 19). If they lost the tracks, they must use any of the entrances they already know, such as the Entrance Caves or the Haunted Lake, and from there find an access to the Fire Pits. If **Hearts of Flame** is being run as a separate adventure (and *only* in this case), it may be assumed the entrance to **F17** is quite visible and obvious from the Moru Path, regardless of whether the Player Characters found the tracks or not.

In any event, as soon as the Player Characters have entered **Area F**, proceed to the following section.

The Fire Pits

These fiery volcanic caves are generally regarded as the limit of the ‘known’ Mount Moru, with everything beyond them being an unexplored underground realm of darkness and mystery. More than the terrifying monsters that *do* live in the Fire Pits, the reason most expeditionary forces stop here are the fearsome fire pits that give the area its name; natural springs of flame and lava that threaten the life of anyone approaching them (see **Area F3** in page 34 of *the Path of Archaneroth*).

While the Player Characters remain in The Fire Pits, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area F: The Fire Pits**, as detailed in page 34 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

If the Player Characters came here investigating the death of Jon the Bolt, their mission is to find the ‘strange creature’ to which the tracks belonged and

try to discover not only what killed the ranger but also what became of the disappeared girl, Namela. If the Player Characters are just passing through **Area F**, their task is simply to find the passages leading to **Area G** and the lower dungeon levels.

BESTING

Most of the area is quite inhospitable; however, the volcanic caves at **F2** are excellent spots to hide and rest, being tolerably warm, well defended and free of dangerous fire pits.

THE END OF THE TRACKS

If the Player Characters entered **Area F** following Asaerpe’s tracks, the trail leads them towards her cave (**F11**); however, first they have to deal with Huugu and Paaku’s guard post (**F13**); if Huugu and Paaku manage to intercept and capture the Player Characters, they are taken to **Area F18** to meet Saitara herself (see below). If the player Characters manage to follow the tracks all the way to Asaerpe’s cave, proceed to **Asaerpe** below.

ASAERPE

When the player Characters enter Asaerpe’s cave, they find her ready to meet them – that is, they do not find a lamia, but her ‘alter ego’ – Namela, the woman that made Jon the Bold fall in love with her. Contrary to what everyone thought, Namela is a lovely, comely *centaur*. She tries to play the ‘damsel in distress’ part, using her Bluff skill to pretend she is a captive in the cave; if the Player Characters followed her tracks all the way to here, she uses her *disguise self* ability to make herself look wounded, and maintains the ‘beast’ they were following attacked her and carried her here. If necessary, she uses *suggestion* or *charm monster* to reinforce her lies. If she gets the Player Characters to believe her, she tries to point them to Eannha’s cave (**F8**), accusing *her* of being the ‘beast’ that keeps her a captive here.

DEVELOPMENT

If the Player Characters discover Asaerpe’s duplicity, she uses her spell-like abilities to take the Player Characters unaware and then pounces on the closest target.

If Asaerpe succeeds in gaining the Player Characters’ goodwill, she tries to seduce the character with the highest Charisma score – she prefers males but will have no qualms about attempting to seduce a female if it becomes necessary. See **Entering the Contest**, below, for Asaerpe’s seduction tactics.

SERELLA

If Serella hears intruders approaching her cave, she immediately uses her *disguise self* ability to appear as a beautiful, redhead Morudhain woman; she does not like the ‘damsel in distress’ guise, so she pretends to be a tough female adventurer, looking for partners to explore the dungeon. If she identifies a Player Character that will fall for a strong, rugged adventuring woman, she tries to seduce him. See **Entering the Contest**, below, for Serella’s seduction tactics.

If Serella’s guise is discovered, she attacks immediately, attempting to target the strongest Player Character with her weakness ability.

EANNHA

If Eannha notices any Player Characters approaching her cave, she uses her *disguise self* ability to look like a beautiful, naked female giant, tied to the bridge over her fire pit (see **Area F8** in page 36 of *The Path of Archaneroth*). If she finds any Player Character susceptible of being seduced, she plays it sexual, making sure of hooking her target with her larger physical gifts. See **Entering the Contest**, below, for Eannha’s other seduction tactics.

If her guise is discovered, Eannha viciously attacks the weakest Player Character (preferably a spellcaster, if she already identified him), using all of her attacks to disable him as hard and fast as possible.

Whatever the result of this encounter, Eannha tries to prevent the Player Characters from visiting **Area F12** (Bungh Bigbelch’s cave), so as not to risk two potential ‘scores’ to kill each other instead of being killed by her.

ENTERING THE CONTEST

It is highly likely the Player Characters will be forced into the contest by the Serella, Eannha and/or Asaerpe. Each of them has a different way to seduce her target, though all of them have two tactics in common: each one will attempt to manipulate her target into attacking the other two contestants and they all try to prevent the other two contestants from seeing them in the Player Characters’ company. The following are each of the three contestants’ specific tactics:

- Serella tries to be rough, lively and brave, choosing targets that appreciate these qualities. She plays the dignified, fearless warrior woman until she has gripped and subjugated the will of her target to the point of killing himself for her.
- Eannha plays the big sex slave, exploiting a target’s

lust in the barest ways she can find, looking for those victims that may be aroused by explicit sex or by the oversized attributes of her disguise. As her limited *disguise self* ability only allows her to appear as the beautiful giantess for a total of three or four hours every day, she often looks for excuses to disappear from her target’s presence, not without ensuring he agrees to a date at a specific later time. She also uses these excuses to prevent being seen by Bungh Bigbelch and any other target at the same time. Eannha is not above manipulating the lust generated by her prolonged absences into an increasing obsession that ends with her target being ready for anything just to see her again.

- Asaerpe plays the platonic lover – her chosen centaur form is intentionally unsuited to satisfy the carnal wishes of most humanoid creatures, so it is easier for her to keep her lovers distant – and yearning. She acts the pure damsel, untouchable but devoted, so as to ensnare her target’s faith and commitment by remaining just out of his reach. If her target was a friend of Jon the Bold, she also pretends to be guilty of her love, with arguments such as ‘I should not love you... you were his friend... yet you are so noble... so much like he was...’

Saitara Sakhija

If Saitara is aware of the Player Characters’ presence before they arrive to her cave (**F18**), she uses her illusion abilities to make it look like a great, sumptuous palace, with marble gates, silk curtains, expensive furniture and exquisite decorations on the walls. She makes the lava pits scattered along the floor look like beautiful indoor lamps; she makes her volcanic rock seat look like a luxurious, golden throne.

Saitara does not like violence; she prefers a diplomatic approach when dealing with intruders. If she considers the Player Characters powerful enough, she proposes one of the following deals, according to the circumstances:

THE DEAL OF LOVE

If all three of her contestants are still alive, Saitara tries to involve the Player Characters in the contest in her own tricky way: just to complicate things, she tells the Player Characters two of the three beautiful females they will find in the caves are actually monsters in disguise; which is true, so the inherent deceit in the phrase cannot be detected by any kind of magic or skill check. She then proceeds to offer her *elixir of love* to the Player Characters, ‘should they wish to

use them in a real, beautiful woman'. In exchange for the information and the potion, Saitara asks the Player Characters to serve her for a full month. She honestly wants this service from the Player Characters and honestly intends to give the payment she offered in exchange, so it should be very hard to sense any kind of duplicity on her part. If the Player Characters refuse, she accepts a magic item of at least equal value in exchange for the potion – 'the information is free'. If the Player Characters still do not want to deal with her, Saitara lets them go with a warning never to cross her path again; however, she hopes her 'information' will cause enough mayhem if the Player Characters believed it.

THE DEAL OF WAR

If the Player Characters have proven strong enough to defeat one or two of Saitara's contestants, she immediately offers them a place as her bodyguards, offering them a *wish* for a year's service. She honestly desires their service and truly plans to concede them a *wish* upon completion of their service year, so there is no duplicity to be detected. If the Player Characters refuse, she sweetens the deal by subtly offering occasional carnal favours as complementary payment, adding that she has the ability to *polymorph* into whatever her partner desires. If the Player Characters still refuse, she lets them go free, simply asking them to stay out of her business from now on.

THE DEAL OF DEATH

If the Player Characters attack Saitara, kill all three of her contestants or defy her in any way, she becomes very angry and lets them know it, using her *enlarge person* and *pyrotechnics* abilities to look angrier and more imposing. She tells them they have 'greatly offended' her but she is willing to forgive the offence if they accept to serve her for one year, after which they shall be released and their debt considered paid. If the Player Characters refuse, she strikes, focusing her attacks on a single enemy until he falls; every time she downs an enemy, she repeats her offer of serving her or dying; she goes on disabling them one by one until they accept her offer or have all fallen to her might.

THE DEAL OF LIFE

If the Player Characters manage to defeat Saitara, she proposes a different deal instead; if they spare her life, she offers them her entire treasure. If they refuse, she offers 1,001 days of service as befits a subdued efreet; if they still refuse, she offers to grant them three *wishes* (which she will obviously try to subvert to hurt the wisher as much as possible). If they accept any of these deals, Saitara twists the deal as much as possible

without betraying her given word; after fulfilling her part, she disappears.

DEVELOPMENT

If the Player Characters accept to serve Saitara, her orders depend on how many of her contestants are still alive:

- If two or more of Saitara's contestants are still alive, she keeps the Player Characters as her bodyguards until the contest has ended or until they rebel against her. If they remain until the contest ends, proceed to **The End of the Contest**, below.
- If only one of her contestants still remains, Saitara calls her to her cave and declares her the winner; proceed to **The End of the Contest**, below.
- If the contest continues and the Player Characters earn her trust (a difficult task, though not impossible) Saitara tells her the true story about the contest up to the point where she intends to kill the winner and keep her heart; she will not comment on how Achrida stole and kept her own heart.
- If none of her contestants are left alive, Saitara furiously orders the Player Character to escort her until they find a suitably evil, monstrous witch that may serve as a replacement for the apprentices she lost. If **Hearts of Flame** was run independently, the adventure ends here; proceed to **Ending the Chapter**, below. If the Player Characters are playing the full campaign, they are free to roam the dungeon as before, except that Saitara will go with them, ordering them around and making their lives miserable until they find her a replacement apprentice or rebel against her.

If Saitara is forced to serve the Player Characters for 1,001 days, she subtly tries to seduce one of her masters or make herself indispensable by always using her powers in the most useful manner. Once she has gained a certain degree of power among the party, be it by becoming the sexual partner of one or more of the party members or simply by always being necessary, she begins to subtly exert this power, discreetly trying to get the party to do what she wants – namely, seek a suitably evil witch and take her before Achrida at N2 so Saitara can recover her heart. If she can actually twist her servitude into mastery and make the Player Characters serve her through subtle manipulation, so much the better; if she can subtly make them suffer in the bargain, she cannot be happier.

THE END OF THE CONTEST

As soon as one of the contestants is declared the winner, Saitara gives her the title of her new apprentice

in a long, pompous ritual, perhaps lasting one or two full days, intended to make the contest winner believe it is all for real. Then, Saitara leaves everything behind – her treasure, her cave, everything – and tricks her newly named ‘apprentice’ into *wishing* her heart to Saitara. Then, the hapless contest winner falls dead; her still-pulsating heart into the hands of Saitara, who immediately leaves in *gaseous form* to **Area N**, to give her newly obtained heart to Achrida. If the Player Characters attempt to stop her, Saitara becomes very angry and attacks, this time giving and asking for no quarter. If they let her go to her date with Achrida, Saitara commands the Player Characters to ‘await her return’ and leaves. However, she shall never return – see **Ending the Chapter**, below.

EXITING AREA F

Area F has more exits than any other dungeon level; from here, it is possible to reach **Area G** via either the fiery pit at **F15** or the sloping tunnel at **F16**; also, it is possible to truly exit the caves through **F17**, which leads to outer Mount Moru; finally, the passage at **F19** leads back to **Area E** after a long sloping ascension.

Ending the Chapter

Chapter Three ends when Saitara’s contest ends, either when one of the contestants wins or by the death of any of the participants, including Saitara herself.

Player Characters should have reached 7th level by the end of this chapter, after they receive all the appropriate story XP awards (see below); if they have not reached at least 7th level, the Games Master should try and encourage them to explore the fire pits further so they can have a few more encounters and/or tie any loose ends. Potential hooks for the Player Characters to continue exploring the caves include:

- Did the Player Characters find out why Asaerpe killed Jon the Bold?
- Was the contest stopped?
- Was ‘Namela’ found? Did the Player Characters learn her true nature?
- Were the Player Characters bound into service to Saitara? Will they stand for it?

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

The following are some of the possible consequences of the characters’ actions during Chapter Three:

- If Saitara is killed, all of her remaining contestants, as well as her servants Huggu and Paaku, seek the Player Characters for revenge.

- If the Player Characters leave Saitara and her contest alone, sooner or later it ends with a winner; see below.
- If Saitara succeeds in getting one of her contestants’ hearts and taking it to Achrida, she finds the awful truth she always knew but was too afraid to admit – Achrida never intended to keep her bargain; indeed, she never needed to replace her *heartstone*. She was just so bored after thousands of years of captivity that she simply decided to be mean to the she-efreet for the plain fun of it. As soon as Saitara delivers the new heart, Achrida bites the genie’s heart with her diseased bite; this kills both the heart and Saitara, after which Achrida burns the efreeti’s body and keeps her diseased heart as her new *heartstone*.
- If Saitara accompanies the Player Characters in their journeys, either by serving them for 1,001 days or demanding they find a replacement for her dead apprentices, she will be a companion (and a true danger) for the Player Characters for as long as they keep her. If the adventure was played as a separate scenario, Saitara remains a companion of the Player Characters for further adventures; if they have the task of finding her a replacement apprentice, it may become the subject of the Player Character’s next quest. In this case, if the Player Characters ever find and kill Achrida (**Area N2** of the dungeon, see page 98 of *The Path of Archaneroth*), they may use the night hag’s *heartstone* to control Saitara; treat the *heartstone* exactly as an *efreeti bottle*, except that it only works on Saitara.
- Note that Saitara’s granted *wishes* cannot break the Travelling Seal in any way.
- If the Player Characters return to the Morudhain village with proof of the identity of Jon’s killer, the Morudhain hail them as skilled scouts and give them their respect, if not necessarily their trust.

REWARDS

There are few monetary rewards for stopping Saitara and her grim contest, except for the treasure that may be found in her lair.

STORY EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Give the Player Characters 4,000 experience points if they stopped Saitara’s contest; give them an additional 4,000 points if they got Saitara to serve them for 1,001 days or grant them three *wishes*. Returning to the Morudhain village to report who killed Jon the Bold nets them an additional 250 experience points.

THE LOST PATH

*My father died looking for a God.
My mother too.*

The Player Characters continue down Mount Moru, this time making a lot of important discoveries and meeting many interesting people, most of them ghosts...

The Diaries of Andwar Bacchi

The great sage Andwar Bacchi, one of the world's main authorities on the subject of deities and folklore, found his greatest unsolved riddle in the Morudhain Lands, when he decided to investigate the region's dragon worship. Bacchi was sure the dragon deities found in both the Athan and Morudhain pantheons were based on the existence of real, god-like dragons that used to share the world with mortals, demanding their worship with their very presence. Bacchi made countless books and treatises about gods and dragons, though he never found the prize he sought, of whose existence he was completely sure: the tomb of the real Dragon Lord, buried below the cursed city of Archaneroth. The sage was convinced the skeleton of a gigantic, titanic dragon – or better yet, his whole embalmed body – was buried somewhere within the Mount. If he could find this relic, it would not only bring glory and respect to his name; it would mean a milestone in the history of mythology.

AIMHA BEPHODAI

During his research, Bacchi discovered the existence of a very interesting character; the Athan priest Aimha Bephodai, known as the Last Priest-King of Archaneroth for he came to the cursed city and tried to rebuild it *after* the fall of the Athan Empire. According to history, Aimha was the last Athan warlord to try and seat himself on the Throne of Archaneroth. History also told us Aimha's efforts had failed scandalously, as could be expected; a series of natural cataclysms

forced him to leave the cursed city and establish his realm in some other Athan ruins, located higher inside the Mount. However, Aimha's biography claimed that, before leaving Archaneroth, he had brought a great secret from it – a relic, a great treasure from the cursed city. Some versions said it was simply a very valuable gem; others argued it was a stone slab containing written information about the burial place of the Dragon Lord. Whatever the truth, there was no doubt about it – Aimha Bephodai had been buried with the stone. Therefore, if the book was to be believed, the tomb of Aimha Bephodai contained the only clue leading to the Tomb of the Dragon Lord.

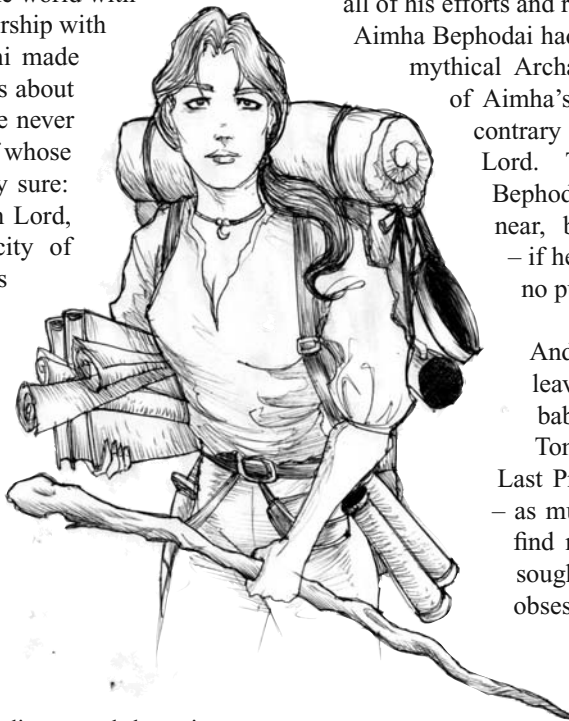
THE SAGE'S OBSESSION

Bacchi knew the Tomb of Aimha Bephodai was his only hope of ever finding the Dragon Lord, so he focused all of his efforts and resources on locating it. Finding Aimha Bephodai had to be much easier than finding mythical Archaneroth; besides, the existence of Aimha's tomb *was* proven by history, contrary to the existence of the Dragon Lord. Therefore, the tomb of Aimha Bephodai became Andwar Bacchi's near, believable, all-consuming goal – if he could not find *this*, his life had no purpose or meaning.

Andwar Bacchi died 25 years ago, leaving behind a loving wife and a baby daughter. He had found the Tomb of Aimha Bephodai but the Last Priest-King was *not* buried there – as much as he looked, Bacchi could find no trace of the fabled tomb he sought. He spent so much time there, obsessed with finding the nonexistent tomb that he was eventually killed, either by the tomb's traps or by the undead monsters roaming it.

Andwar Bacchi died convinced he would find what he never found, leaving his life behind in a lost path in search of the dead.

However, he did not die forgotten; now, 25 years later, his daughter is ready to go after him into the mountain.



THE LOST PATH

CHAPTER GUIDE: LOST PATH

This chapter represents not only the chronological midpoint of the main campaign; it is also pivotal to the narrative, revealing a lost Athan tomb, the ghosts of important Non-Player Characters and, at last, the final fate of Aedhaine's Moru Tribe. More importantly, this chapter contains many useful clues to finish the campaign successfully; Player Characters must be careful, resourceful and lucky to find them all.

Expected Character Level: Before beginning this chapter, Player Characters should be at least 7th level. Lower-level characters are well advised to adventure a bit more before entering The Deep Caves; higher-level characters should enter the mountain at a later point, as indicated in the **Chapter Guide** sidebar of each of the following chapters.

PLAYING LOST PATH AS A SEPARATE ADVENTURE

Lost Path may be played separately, as a long dungeon scenario for 7th level characters. To introduce Player Characters directly to this chapter, it is assumed they agreed to escort Aurelia to Mount Moru; this may require one of the character hooks provided below. Start the adventure as normal (see **The Road Begins**, page 8), except there are no rumours about any strange happenings – no mention of Stonehold, the goblins or the Haunted Lake. However, the disappearance of Aedhaine and her tribe are still commented on and the Last Shrine is still organising a Moru Expedition. Also, the Player Characters begin directly at Meadowvale's Old Stone Inn (see **The Path of Andwar Bacchi**, below).

Character Hooks

If playing **Lost Path** separately, use one of the following options to hook the characters into the adventure:

- The Player Characters are Aurelia's friends, willing to go with her for the sake of companionship.
- Aurelia hired the Player Characters to go with her into Mount Moru, though she cannot pay much (she offers a paltry 500 gp advance). However, she promises the Player Characters they may keep all the loot they can find inside the mountain, with the sole condition of leaving any written stuff – scrolls, books and so on – to her.
- Aurelia *is* one of the Player Characters and the rest of the party are simply tagging along – in this case, Aurelia's character should be raised to 7th level. The player that accepts to run Aurelia should be allowed to decide her skills, feats, spells and other elements of her level advancement as he sees fit.

Adapting the Adventure Further

When running **Lost Path** independently, apply the following modifications to the main story:

- The outer accesses from Moru Path and the Haunted Lake are blocked by rubble.
- There is a new open access into Mount Moru, located almost at the mountain peak and leading down almost 3,000 feet to **Area G1**; Aurelia should know of this passage and lead the Player Characters to it.
- The passages to **F15** and **F16** do not exist; **G1** simply leads out to the mountain peak and **G2** is a true landslide that entirely blocks the passage.
- Fiall Gamwynn (**G11**) and Andwar Bacchi (**H12**) mention the 'third explorer', a 'woman called Aedhaine, who led her whole tribe to the base of mount Moru'. They do not know anything else about Aedhaine's Moru Tribe but they should mention it so as to give Player Characters a reason to seek the Morudhain at **Area I**.
- The pass at **I16** is actually a wall; remove areas **I16**, **I17** and **I18** from the adventure, unless the Games Master wishes to allow the Player Characters to continue the exploration of Mount Moru from here.

AURELIA

Bacchi's bright-eyed daughter, Aurelia, grew with the image of a lost father that disappeared before she could remember. She zealously read and reread her lost father's notes and treatises; she researched all of his sources and expanded on what he had

discovered, until she was at least as knowledgeable as he had been on the subject of Mount Moru and its ancient cultures. Her mother died of a broken heart, completely overwhelmed by despair upon seeing her only daughter succumb to the same obsession that had devoured her father. However, Aurelia does not think

she is obsessed. She fully knows and admits her true reasons for researching Mount Moru – she wants to look for her father. She wants to find him and try to understand why he abandoned her. When she believed she was ready, Aurelia took her travelling notes, her personal diary and a freshly-finished spellbook, after which she went to Meadowvale, bought supplies and sat waiting for a party of brave adventurers willing to take her into the heart of Mount Moru to look for her disappeared father. Enter the Player Characters...

Chapter Sections

The adventure begins when the Player Characters head off into Mount Moru with Aurelia, the daughter of Andwar Bacchi. From there, it takes the Player Characters into Mount Moru to search for the sage's lost path.

The Path of Andwar Bacchi: This section, which may take place either in Meadowvale or inside the Mount Moru dungeon, has Aurelia reminiscing about her father and the quest that took his life, in an encounter intended to introduce the Player Characters to the adventure.

The Deep Caves: The Player Characters descend into Mount Moru through The Deep Caves, where they find a strange collection of exotic creatures and may also encounter a mad hunter and the ghost of a great man...

Tomb of the Athan Kings: This section is the core and climax of Chapter Four, where the Player Characters enter the ruins of Aimha Bephodai's tomb and attempt to succeed where Aurelia's father failed.

The Resting Place: This final part wraps up the **Lost Path** chapter, with the Player Characters finally finding out what happened to Aedhaine's Morudhain Tribe and to the dreams of every explorer of the Moru depths within the last century. The discovery may, of course, put further adventures in the horizon...

The Path of Andwar Bacchi

It is all a Lost Path. That Morudhain matriarch, my father; all of them always looking for dead things, obsessed with dead things. All of them living and breathing death instead of their own lives. Just like the Athans... just like those cultures that built tombs larger than their own homes. Larger than their palaces, even. I read the largest Athan tomb ever built was as large as a city, can you imagine? A whole city full of nothing but dead, buried people.

Aurelia tucks a hair lock behind her ear and continues, the lights of the bonfire flushing her face and lighting her eyes as if her passion was an actual inner fire.

Let them rest, I say. Let the dead rest. That is why I am seeking my father's tomb – I want to find it, I, I want to ask... I want to put him to rest. I want to find him and then leave him, then, I mean, then put him to rest.

Aurelia's voice trails off, as if she lost her train of thought. Then her eyes fix again, her face sets and she pulls out some maps.

My father left a lot of maps and notes, indicating the location of the Athan Tomb very clearly. That is how I do not plan to spend ten years searching as he did; if these notes are correct, we should be finding the... burial site in a few days at most. What troubles me is what me might find on the way there; Mount Moru has not proven to be the most safe or hospitable of places, particularly in recent times. That, I am afraid, is where you come in.

As Aurelia smiles and looks at you half-pleadingly, half-mockingly, the emotional turmoil inside her becomes evident. You can tell the woman is flustered by the idea of finally finding her father's tomb, a moment for which she has waited more than 20 years; however, she is also scared of the Moru dangers, specially at the great depths where the Tomb is supposed to be located. More than anything, though, is her unabated drive which shows – her certainty that she will do whatever she can to reach her goals, whatever may come.

Thus begins this chapter of the saga, with the Player Characters listening to Aurelia Bacchi's plans of following her father's lost path. As the Games Master reads the above text aloud, he should also describe the environment to the Player Characters; there are two places where this conversation may be taking place.

- If the Player Characters wanted to return to Meadowvale at some point after Chapter Three, or if **Lost Path** is being played as a separate adventure, the adventure begins at the Old Stone Inn in Meadowvale. Describe the Inn according to the information found in page 7 of *The Dragon Stone* and explain the Player Characters are there at the expense and request of Aurelia Bacchi, her interlocutor; if they had not encountered her before, this is the time to say she is a young wizard and the daughter of Andwar Bacchi, a sage and explorer that disappeared in Mount Moru 25 years ago.

THE LOST PATH

- If the Player Characters did not leave Mount Moru after Chapter Three, this encounter takes place while camping in the tunnels outside **Area F**. Describe the underground tunnel area and inform the Player Characters they are talking with Aurelia Bacchi while camping in the Moru dungeon. If they had not encountered her before, explain Aurelia is a wizard and the daughter of Andwar Bacchi; she casually ran into the Player Characters while exploring the dungeon on her own.

The above introduction is meant only to increase dramatic impact and it does not affect the adventure itself in any way; to begin with, it is completely inappropriate if Aurelia is a Player Character. Furthermore, it is possible such an introduction could bother some players or Games Masters, as it puts the Player Characters right in the middle of the action without giving them time to decide whether or not they wanted to do something before this encounter or even wanted to have this encounter at all. However, such an introduction does help dramatic impact and allows the Player Characters to get a stronger, quicker involvement in the adventure; therefore, to use it or not is largely the Games Master's discretion. If such an introduction is not to the Games Master's taste, simply start the encounter earlier by narrating Aurelia's encounter (or conversation) with the Player Characters from the beginning, be it at Meadowvale or the dungeon.

THE MISSION

If Aurelia was already a member of the party before Chapter Four (be it as a Player or Non-Player Character), she probably does not need to ask the Player Characters to accompany her to the Athan Tomb; in all likelihood, their mission is already either to escort her to her goal or to continue searching for Aedhaine's Tribe, both of which require them to simply continue further into the dungeon.

If Aurelia was not already a member of the party at this moment, she is offering the Player Characters a job as her guides and escorts to the Athan Tomb, below the most dangerous area of Mount Moru. She does not have much money; she offers a 500 gp advance (her entire savings), plus the Player Characters are entitled to all the loot found during the expedition except for texts and writings (scrolls, books and so on). This is the time for the Player Characters to decide whether they want to accept her offer or not. If they agree, she joins the party; as of now, their mission during this chapter is to guide Aurelia to the Athan Tomb. If they

refuse, Aurelia continues 'on her own', yet keeping close tabs on the party as they are probably bound to the same direction.

It bears noting Aurelia has copies of her father's notes, which clearly indicate the history and location of the Athan Tomb although they do not say how to get there or what one may expect to find once inside it.

FROM HERE

If the party is already in the dungeon since Chapter Three, all that remains is to continue to **Area G**.

If the party was in Meadowvale, they need to head back to Mount Moru and enter the dungeon by any other access they know, preferably the passage at **F17** if they already found it.

THE HIGH ENTRANCE

If **Lost Path** is being run as a separate adventure, Aurelia has maps and notes indicating an entrance near the peak of Mount Moru, 3,500 feet above ground level. Reaching this entrance requires walking up Moru Path for about a day and then climbing the mountain wall, which requires a successful Climb check (DC 25), for another eight hours. After this climb, the Player Characters reach a cave that leads 2,000 feet down to The Deep Caves (**Area G**). Climbing down this cave requires another two days of vertical descent and a successful Climb check (DC 25). Once the Player Characters have negotiated both climbs, they arrive at **Area G1** below.

The Deep Caves

Those living outside Mount Moru give the name 'The Deep Caves' to everything between the base of Mount Moru and the Fire Pits. As these caves are indeed deep and mostly unexplored, most people consider them to be a wide, empty underground wilderness. The deep caves at **Area G**, in particular, are the antechambers to the Tomb of the Athan Kings but they are also the home of a strange man. His name is Kaedru and he is a hunter of monstrous creatures; when he became tired of civilisation, he retired to Mount Moru, where he continued hunting monsters without trouble. Eventually, he gathered a great collection of beasts and decided to settle a true dungeon in the caves, to keep all the monsters he had caught. He chose the Deep Caves to arrange his menagerie; a gathering of strange beasts, brought from all confines of the mountain. At the time the Player Characters enter the area, Kaedru has almost completed his collection and is ready to expand to another cave complex.

THE LOST PATH

While the Player Characters remain in The Deep Caves, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area G: The Deep Caves**, as detailed in page 39 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

The Player Characters need to find the access to the next lower dungeon level (**Area H: Tomb of the Athan Kings**), regardless of whether they actually have the mission to look for the Athan Tomb or they are simply looking for a way deeper into the dungeon. In both cases, their goal is to continue down – if the Hunter and his creatures let them pass.

BESTING

There are no safe places to rest in the Deep Caves unless the Player Characters deal with all the creatures in Kaedru's collection. Their best bet is to climb back to **Area F** via **G2** and rest in an **F1** area.

FIALL GARNWYNN

The Deep Caves also hold the ghost of a renowned writer and explorer of Mount Moru who goes by the name of Fiall Garnwynn, who died a couple of years ago. Aurelia and anyone else that has read Garnwynn's works already know who he was; any other character must succeed at a Knowledge (history) check (DC 25) or Knowledge (local) check (DC 20) to have heard of him. While living, Garnwynn became obsessed with the cult of dragons, just as Andwar Bacchi did; however, Garnwynn was much more successful in his search – and what he found nearly drove him mad. Immediately after he died, his ghost manifested here (**Area G11**), a few feet from the entrance to the Athan Tomb, to warn all travellers against searching for the secrets of the Athans.

THE GHOST BARD

Garnwynn's ghost manifests as soon as any living creature sets foot in his cave; his personality and statistics can be found in the **Appendix**. For insights about Garnwynn's history and background, read the book about his life and works, entitled *The Dragon Stone*.

Garnwynn's ghost speaks in disjointed riddles, apparently making little sense. If the Player Characters choose to speak to the dead bard, the Games Master may use the following as excerpts of his dialogue.

I feel ambivalent about all of this... it makes sense, of course; I am an ambivalent creature.

I thought. I thought I knew. Those who think and those who know, that is all the difference. Those who think they know, think; those who know simply know, they do not have to think. I used to think too. I used to think too much. I died, thinking 'these are my last thoughts'. I never knew. Had I known, had I known I would have brought this cursed mountain down around that cursed dragon's ears...

The Morudhain were left waiting, waiting... they have endured, they have waited, they have been reliable and remained behind, waiting for whatever it was the gods promised when they left, when the dragon killed them by bringing death.

Dragons, gods, what was the difference then...? Great monsters, treading the land, greater than everything, greater than us... By all that is eternal, have you stared at the gods?

Can you not feel it? Everything, everything in this doomed realm is empty... empty and unused... the gods took the Moru Country and left it to rot, to gather dust, along with all the good that it could have been, that it could have given...

That is the dragon. That is the power of the dragon. To leave things empty and void... to create death, to create a kingdom for death, for dust and ashes...

This mountain is a monument for the dragon... it is His needle, His dark humus, His petrified waste. It rose here for him, not the other way around. There is no other way around. There is no way around, you have to go in. That is how it is with everything. You have to go in and to the Abyss with the consequences...

She took the dragon, she did... Aedhaine carried the dragon with her as she sought it.

Oh no no no no, you will not get me to say anything more about the dragon, I went through that already... no thank you.

There you go bothering me with the dragon again. He was no dragon, all right? He was a man. Or, at least, he thought he was a man... that cursed blood of dragons, it is everywhere... it is in everything and everywhere... if the universe wants you to be a dragon you will be one. The problem with this chap is he, he wanted to be a dragon himself... a dragon lord, of all things... a dragon lord!

THE LOST PATH

Go, go look for death. That is what you do and you know it. You even have the map showing 'death is that way, please enter and close the door after you come in'. And there you go. Let the universe fall around you, you will not turn back; you will not let go of death. You will not let go of death.

If Garnwynn finds a Player Character of good alignment, with at least 4 ranks in Knowledge (history) and whose total Intelligence and Wisdom scores total 30 or higher (Aurelia qualifies), he says 'You shall go on... you shall continue on the Lost Path... you shall face dragons and die...' and gives the character his **Last Notes** (see below). As soon as the chosen character takes the notes, Garnwynn disappears into oblivion forever with a sigh of relief, his mission in life fulfilled.

If attacked, Garnwynn's ghost disappears, never manifesting again before the creatures that attacked him. If forced to fight, he counterattacks, yelling 'Yes! YES! Ruin! Dragons! Let us spill blood over the dust and ashes!'

The Last Notes

The last secrets Fiall Garnwynn discovered, which he took with him to the grave, are written in a single scroll, which he keeps even in ghost form. The bard cannot rest until he finds a worthy heir for his last notes; as soon as he encounters such an heir, he passes his last secrets on and disappears forever, free at last from eternal life. Fiall Garnwynn's notes, written in Draconic, read the following:

*I am a Dragon – I Died a Man
Everybody is a Dragon – Nobody Is
All Dragons – Nobody Knows*

*When Wyrms Were:
Wyrms Race,
Wyrms God,
Wyrms Mother,
Wyrms Lord*

*All Are Again:
Athans,
Amaros,
Aedhaine,
Aogarn*

*W is Wrong
A is Answer*

*Wyrms,
All
All Wyrms – Nobody Knows*

*The Dragon God is a Dragon-He Sleeps
The Dragon Lord is a Man-He Shall Awake*

*'The Tears He Shed For Himself'
Let My Tears Be Shed For Someone Else Now*

*Not For Me
Not For Dragons
No Dragons*

*No Dragon For The Twelfth Darkness,
No Dragon For The Twelfth Light.*

KAEDRU

Kaedru the hunter is one of the many strong half-dragons that rose to power and settled in Mount Moru, creating their own realms there. Kaedru chose these caves for the isolation, for they were a place where nobody would bother him as he hunted and collected his monsters. During the last three years, no humanoid being had bothered Kaedru; if he learns of any intruder in her turf, he reacts quite violently.

ENCOUNTERING KAEDRU

Unless the Player Characters are extremely stealthy and manage to avoid setting off the shriekers (**G3**) or giving any other warning about their presence, Kaedru is warned of their presence and keeps an eye on them. If they attempt anything against his collection or they remain in the caves for more than an hour or two, he attacks. If they are stealthy enough as to not warn Kaedru of their presence, the Player Characters encounter him in his chambers at **G17**; in this case, he reacts to the invasion as quickly and violently as he can.

It is possible to approach Kaedru peacefully; however, once an intruding party has gotten on his nerves he will not let them go until they have tested their skill against one of his creatures. He proposes a contest of strength and skill of the party against his mightiest monster; if the Player Characters refuse, he attacks them, intent on subduing and forcing them to face his beasts anyway. If the Player Characters agree to (or are forced to) fight to test their skill, he leads them to the pit at **G10**, so they face his Great Dragon.

Kaedru's background and statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

EXITING AREA G

Area G1 leads up to the surface, near the peak of Mount Moru itself, after almost three days of vertical climb (Climb check DC 25); the natural staircase on the wall also leads to the fiery pit at **F15**. **Area G2** leads up to the passage at **F16**; **Area G16** is the entrance to **Area H**.

Special Note: The Cave-In

If the Player Characters cause the cave-in at **Area G15**, it is quite possible they have completely cut off the access between **Areas G1-G14** and the entrance at **G16**; this apparently means the Athan Tomb (**Area H**), which can only be accessed from **G16**, becomes sealed forever; Player Characters are likely to despair if they are allowed to believe this. Nonetheless, there is another entrance into **Area H**; the Great pit at **H2**, which connects to outer mount Moru above and to **Area I** below. If necessary, Aurelia owns notes indicating the existence of another access into the Tomb; even if the notes do not indicate where that access may be, that should be enough to lift the spirits of Player Characters giving in to despair.

Tomb of the Athan Kings

The Tomb of the Athan Kings was so called because it was used to bury the last Athan warlords, those who died during the civil wars after the fall of Archaneroth; it is a monument to the neglect and decline of the last years of the Athan Empire. Aimha Bephodai, the Last Priest-King of Archaneroth, is supposed to be buried here, along with many lesser kings and nobles that died during the Athan decadence. However, Aimha's tomb has never been found; perhaps it shall never be.

While the Player Characters remain in the Tomb of the Athan Kings, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area H: Tomb of the Athan Kings**, as detailed in page 44 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

If the Player Characters come with Aurelia, their mission is to help her find her father and, perhaps, the tomb of Aimha Bephodai as well. Otherwise, their only goal should be to explore the tomb until they find a way deeper below. If the Player Characters caused the cave-in at **G15**, they may also be a bit preoccupied about finding an exit to the surface...

BESTING

There are no safe places to rest inside **Area H**. The Player Characters' best option is to leave through the north exit at **H1** and rest at **Area G16**, which is relatively peaceful and free from random encounters, particularly if the Player Characters blocked the **G15** pass.

THE GHOST OF ANDWAR BACCHI

This area is where the sage Andwar Bacchi died, his life and his quest a failure. The undead creatures in the area slew him and devoured his body; however, his ghost still haunts **Area H12**. If any living creature approaches **H12**, Andwar manifests, demanding answers not from the Player Characters but apparently from thin air – from the gods themselves, perhaps...

ENCOUNTERING BACCHI

If the Player Characters attempt to talk to Bacchi, he simply replies with pathetic, vague pleas asking for the answer to his quest, lamenting his failure and begging the gods to grant him a sign, as if he was still alive and still looking for the door. Ironically, his ghost automatically found the place his living body never did; as soon as he was killed, the strength of his obsession was such his ghostly form was immediately drawn to the very spot he had so yearned to find – the secret door into the Athan King's chambers. The statistics of Andwar Bacchi's ghost may be found in the **Appendix**.

DEVELOPMENT

If Aurelia is present (and she is not a Player Character), she is utterly shocked by the wretched sight of her father's shade; unable to react or say anything, she simply pulls back, all her years of questions and yearning caught in her throat. Her father does not even recognise her, not even if she manages to tell him who she is.

If Bacchi is attacked, he counterattacks, mainly with spells and special ghost abilities. The ghostly sage strikes without any strategy or control, exactly as if he had gone mad. As soon as he is defeated or there are no moving creatures in sight, he emits an awful howl and disappears.

The only way to dispel Bacchi's ghost and forever grant him respite from undeath is for someone to successfully open the secret door in his presence. If this happens, Bacchi disappears, saying nothing, with tears of happiness in his eyes...

AIMHA BEPHODAI

Aimha Bephodai, the Last Athan Priest-King, sits on a stone slab in a bare burial chamber at **H15**. He was buried alone, without servants or treasures, as per his own request; he asked only to keep his weapon, should he get tired of undeath and wish to kill himself again. Aimha Bephodai was tired and defeated, disappointed with his spectacular failure at rebuilding Archaneroth and resigned to whatever the gods had in mind to punish his people. In the end, he expected all the trappings and ostentation of the Athan Culture to die with him. Besides his armour and weapons, the only item he asked to be buried with was the jewel he brought back from Archaneroth – a single drop of brass. According to legend, that drop of brass held the secret to finding the Dragon Lord; however, Aimha Bephodai never found out this secret. As soon as he became undead (for he did, as most high-ranking Athan mummies have done) he simply remained there, sitting very still, trying to read the stone as if it was a book; and so he has remained for the last millennia, with the patience of a true undead lord, sitting as a real dead body, making no sound or movement, trying to read the Stone.

ENCOUNTERING AIMHA BEPHODAI

Despite being evil to the core, Aimha Bephodai retains more common sense and vision than most of his peers. He is more interested in talking to the living than fighting them; his centuries of solitude have given him plenty of time to mull over and meditate about the brass drop and its significance. He proudly states how he rejected the façade and trappings of Athan nobility, refusing to be buried with statues, jewellery or slaves; he preferred his eternity to be bare and introspective. Despite his claims of austerity and humility, Aimha is still very proud of himself, taking his own self-image and point of view extremely seriously; thus he is very easily insulted. If Aimha Bephodai is attacked or offended in any way, he attacks; for example, if told about the statue at **H28**, Aimha Bephodai is too offended to even consider the veracity of the information and attacks whoever suggested such blasphemy. Aimha's statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

THE STATUE

Unknown to Aimha, his high priests erected a great statue in his likeness, hidden at the remotest chamber in the tomb (**H28**); after Aimha's death, the few surviving Athan priests rejected the Dragon Lord that had allowed their civilisation to crumble and elevated their King to demigod status, beginning a

blasphemous worshiping of Aimha Bephodai as a dark god of evil and death. Furthermore, they cast a powerful curse on the statue – if the mummified body of Aimha Bephodai was ever destroyed, his immortal soul would come to inhabit the statue; then the Athan priests would have a god again. Unfortunately for the priests, they all died and the Athan culture died completely before they saw their god come to life.

The walls on the statue's room (**H28**) are completely full of arcane writings and mysteries related to the Athan religion, all of them written in the Athan Secret Tongue (detailed in page 52 of *The Dragon Stone*). A character that successfully deciphers these writings gains a +4 bonus on all further Knowledge (religion) checks made about the Athan religion while inside the room, plus he may take 20 in any such Knowledge (religion) check, regardless of circumstances.

EXITING AREA H

The only exits from the Athan Tomb are the north door at **H1**, which leads back to **Area G**, and the Great Pit at **H2**, which leads up to the surface and down to **Area I**. The **H1** exit may have become useless if the Player Characters caused the cave-in at **G15**.

The Resting Place

Thus called both because the Mount rests on it and because of the hundreds of people that have died there, the Resting Place recently became the burial site for Aedhaine's entire Moru Tribe as well. A few months ago, during a religious split in the tribe, Aedhaine's son Aogarn betrayed his people to the undead spirits of the mountain, leaving his kin to die at the hands of the mountain's shades while he and his personal guards continued deeper into the mount. When the Player Characters arrive, many of the dead members of the Moru Tribe have risen from their graves as shadows themselves, guarding their own burial ground forever...

While the Player Characters remain in The Resting Place, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area I: The Resting Place**, as detailed in page 55 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

If the Player Characters entered the mount only to escort Aurelia on her quest or were simply passing through, they probably have little to do in **Area I**, unless they are looking for a lower exit or have become interested in investigating the final grave of the Moru Tribe, the last explorers of Mount Moru. If the Player Characters *did* enter the mountain

looking for Aedhaine, this level is the final goal of their quest, for here it is that Aedhaine's Moru Tribe were slaughtered by the Moru shadows – here is that the Player Characters shall find the first goal of their quest.

BESTING

It is easy to get lost in these incredibly wide and dark caves; it is also easy to find a quiet spot where nobody can find you. Player Characters can rest safely in almost any non-keyed area if they succeed on a Survival check (DC 15). If the check fails, they have not hidden themselves correctly and they risk a random encounter as normal. Keyed areas **I1**, **I13** and **I14** are also good spots to rest and recover the party's strength, particularly if they arrive to **I14** when Valcio is there.

THE BANDED GOD

Uncounted centuries ago, after the Morudhain Gods left the world but before the Athans came, there existed a primitive tribe of cave dwellers in the base of Mount Moru. These primitive men worshipped archaic devils and unnatural spirits, to which they paid dark and obscene homage out of fear. The greatest of these devils was known as the Banded God, a primal half-snake, half-human creature, more a monstrous spirit than a true god. The Banded God still lives in this level; in the small subterranean cavern (**I5**) constituting the only remaining vestige of the petty, primitive culture that worshipped it. The Banded God has lived through many centuries of immortal boredom, during which it has dedicated itself to gather and memorise information about its surroundings. As a result, it is arguably the most knowledgeable creature inside Mount Moru – not that it will gladly share its information out of goodwill to anybody.

Encountering the Banded God

The Banded God gets little pleasure from anything except killing and torturing other beings. When intruders come to its cave, it attempts to distract them by talking them out of their secrets while sharing a few minor titbits itself. As soon as its opponents lower their guards and believe they are simply having a conversation, it attacks by surprise.

The following are a few of the facts the Banded God may share with the Player Characters if they know what to ask. The Player Characters may ask no more than 1d6 questions before the Banded God loses its patience and attacks the Player Characters, so they should choose their questions wisely.

- A detailed account of the fall of the Athan Empire, as recounted in page 19 of *The Dragon Stone* and page 5 of this book.
- A cryptic phrase about Luedhain, the Morudhain chieftain (see page 18 in *The Dragon Stone*): 'Luedhain was Amaros – they were always the same person; though Luedhain came first – and when he came, he was Amaros'.
- The exact circumstances of the Moru Tribe's slaughter, as recounted in page 54 of this book.
- The fact there were survivors of the Moru Tribe, led by Aedhaine's son, and they continued on down by one of the eastern passages.
- The exact contents of each and every one of the dungeon levels from **Area A** to **Area N**.
- The complete, detailed situation between the three giant tribes at areas **J** and **K**.
- The fact that the city of Archaneroth (**Area O**) *did* exist somewhere below the mount but the gods banished it from the Mortal Plane and sent it to Hell.
- The fact that Aogarn was looking for Archaneroth.
- A few memories about Fiall Garnwynn, who passed through and talked to the Banded God a bit more than a century ago. 'He seemed joyful, the stupid mortal... *joyful* about entering this cursed place, about looking for dragons'
- The fact that there has been a boom of half-dragon births during the last 50 years.
- The history of the Dark Strife, as told in page 17 of *The Dragon Stone*.
- The location of the Nightwalker and the Unicorn Horn and how to open the tomb using the Three Seals.
- The existence of the dark creature called the Wyrm-Worm, the very embodiment of death and shadow in the universe.
- The fact the Nightwalker (**N7**) and the Nightwing (**K13**) are both the spawn of the Wyrm-Worm.
- The fact the Wyrm-Worm is the spawn of the Old Dragon itself.
- The fact the Old Dragon *does* sleep below the Mount, though it does not know where.
- A bit of advice: 'Dragons love riddles. Dragons *are* riddles. Do not fight a dragon if you cannot defeat a riddle. Specially, do *not* seek the Dragon Lord if you do not have the answer to *all* the riddles'.

THE GRAVEYARD

Many centuries ago, there was a large graveyard in what are currently areas **I11** and **I12**. When a massive cave-in separated the two halves of the great cave,

THE LOST PATH

the graveyard was divided in two – a west graveyard and an east graveyard, each of them with about 12 gravestones.

THE CARETAKERS

Curiously enough, each of the graveyards' two halves attracted a caretaker – two creatures, attracted to death for different reasons, which chose to take possession of the graveyard also for different reasons. These are the graveyard's 'caretakers', who arrived to the graveyards at different times and without any previous agreement, without even knowing each other:

- Kuro, an ogre mage from faraway lands; Kuro somehow became a worshipper of the Athan Lords of Death (see page 23 in *The Dragon Lords*); as such, he constantly experiments on corpses' bodies, attempting new rituals to create undeath every day. When he found the graveyard he decided to settle there but Khazi'id (see below) beat him to the graveyard's western half. Kuro is very knowledgeable in the subject of death, for he scavenges and studies every dead body he can find. He even stole away with a few bodies from the Morudhain Grave (**Area I10**) before it became riddled with shadows and wraiths. He saw the battle between the Morudhain and the shades; he can tell the Player Characters what happened in exchange for gold or body parts.
- Khazi'id La'adorg, a drow elf necromancer, has made his base of operations in the West graveyard; there, he uses the mortal remains for spell components and alchemical ingredients. His strange interests have earned him a death sentence in drow lands, which have sent a drow party to find and capture him. Khazi'id can be quite good mannered and co-operative, despite his evil bent; he is also quite well informed about the surrounding area and its denizens; in fact he knows the way from here to **Area L** and back, including all the potential dangers and encounters in the way. Khazi'id gladly strikes a deal with the Player Characters, giving them any information or materials they ask for if they get rid of the drow search party or his rival Kuro.

FINDING THE DROW SEARCH PARTY

If the Player Characters agree to help Khazi'id against the drow search party and they have not encountered it already, they may be found by succeeding at a Survival check (DC 25) to find their tracks near areas **I13** and **I14**. The drow search party is also willing to negotiate with the Player Characters for help in finding Khazi'id or Tahi'ri the Thing (**Area I8**); however, after

the Player Characters gave their help, the drow search party would turn on them immediately.

VALCIO THE MERCHANT

The merchant Uberto Valcio Wendolino was part of a caravan from the far southwest, which crossed the Moru Country looking to establish trade routes with the Morudhain Tribes. Valcio sold fine clothes and jewellery, as well as weapons and armour; his wagon was the slowest in the caravan, so he started lagging behind. While he was crossing the rocky hill country on the North Moru Slopes, he fell into a fissure, wagon and all; his vehicle shattered and his mule broke its neck, though he and half his wares survived. When he regained his bearings, Valcio discovered he was lost in an underground cave, with nothing but his exotic articles to survive. After a few near-encounters with the horrid monsters of the area, he retreated to the caves at **I14**, where he set up camp and has been cowering for the last few days. If he meets any human travellers, he reacts first with fear, then with hope, then with desperation – he is willing to pay anything, be it gold or items, to be led to the surface again. Valcio's statistics, as well as the items he has for sale, are given in the **Appendix**.

THE MORUDHAIN GRAVE

This mass grave is where all the Moru Tribe fell after Aogarn's treachery and the unfortunate encounter with the Moru shadows. Now, all that is left of the tribe is a big necropolis, where the bodies of hundreds of men, women and children lie below the ground, their spirits having joined the legions of undead shadows that infest these zones of Mount Moru.

AEDHAINE

The shade of Aedhaine, twisted and corrupted by the undead creatures that killed her months ago, still haunts her own burial ground in the exact centre of the mass grave. To cleanse her soul of the undead taint, the Player Characters have to destroy the shade. If they do, Aedhaine disperses into nothingness, thankful and beautiful as she was in life, murmuring the words:

'My son... he survived... he is alive... please find my son...'

EXITING AREA I

Besides the Great Pit access at **Area I1**, there is another surface access at **Area I2**, though it is blocked by a landslide. If the Player Characters succeed in unblocking this landslide (see page 56 in *The Path of Archaneroth*), they would not only gain an access to the surface but they would also unblock the old Moru

Road, allowing it to be used again to go from here to the surface and vice versa. In addition, there are two tunnels at **I17** and **I18**, both leading to **Area J**.

Ending the Chapter

Chapter Four ends when the Player Characters exit **Area H** having discovered the fate of Andwar Bacchi and the Tomb of Aimha Bephodai; if they also had the mission or goal to find Aedhaine's Moru Tribe, the chapter only ends when they have *also* come out of **Area I** having discovered the Morudhain's fate.

Player Characters should have reached 9th level by the end of this chapter, after they receive all the appropriate story XP awards (see below); if they have not reached at least 9th level, the Games Master should try and encourage them to explore both The Athan Tomb and the Resting Place further so they can have a few more encounters and/or tie any loose ends. Potential hooks for the Player Characters to continue exploring the dungeon include:

- Did the Player Characters find the secret temple behind Aimha Bephodai's tomb?
- Did they find the grave where Aedhaine herself was buried? Did they put her shade to rest?
- Did they fully explore the Resting Place? Did they find the accesses into **Area J**?

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

This Chapter marks the first half of **The Blood of Dragons**; if the Player Characters continue with the adventure, their mission is no longer to find Aedhaine's lost tribe – now they have to find her son Aogarn, who survived his people's massacre and went on to find Archaneroth with his mother's Dragon Stone. The Player Characters learn that Aogarn survived if they speak to Kuro, Aedhaine's Shade and/or the Banded God; if they spoke to none of these creatures and believe their mission has ended, High Priest Deovain may give them the information if and when they return to the Last Shrine.

If the Player Characters had a specific mission in **Area I**, they might want to return and report their results:

- If the Player Characters return to Meadowvale with proof of having cleared the blocked passage at Moru Road, Lost Pass Junction is officially declared open again and a community effort to restore the trade route across mount Moru begins right away.
- If the Player Characters return to the Dragon Stone Clan Lands with proof of having found Aedhaine's grave and the fate of the Moru Tribe, they are forever regarded as friends of the Dragon

Stone Clan and given treatment of true brothers whenever they visit their lands. The Dragon Stone Clan also asks the Player Characters to return to Mount Moru and recover Aedhaine's lost Dragon Stone from whoever stole it from her grave. They cannot pay much but they promise years of blessings, shelter, food and goodwill in exchange for this favour.

- If the Player Characters were hired by the Last Shrine and return there to report the massacre of the Moru Tribe, High Priest Deovain insists they return and keep on searching the Unicorn Horn in the lower dungeon levels; he had a vision about 'the Dragon heading to the Depths', which must mean a member of the tribe must have survived and be taking the Dragon Stone further below...

In addition, the following are some of the possible consequences of the characters' actions during Chapter Four:

- If the Player Characters put Andwar Bacchi's ghost to rest and/or successfully find Aimha Bephodai's tomb, Aurelia offers to continue with the party, having lost all reason to carry on her quest; whether she does continue with them or not is the Player Character's decision.
- If the Player Characters destroyed Aedhaine's shade, the shadows and wraiths at **Area I** lose their power for a full year, making The Resting Place a much safer way to cross.

REWARDS

Besides the great amounts of treasure to be found in **Area H**, the drow party following rewards are available in **Area I**:

- Khazi'id and Kuro have a lot of available information about Mount Moru, its places and creatures.
- Valcio is willing to give the Player Characters anything they wish if they lead him to the surface again.

STORY EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Give the Player Characters 4,000 experience points if they put Andwar Bacchi's ghost to rest, plus 2,000 experience points if they received Fiall Garnwynn's last notes. Give them an additional 3,000 experience points if they put Aedhaine's shade to rest, plus another 3,000 if they return to the Dragon Stone Clan with the news. Give them another 1,000 experience points if they cleared the rubble from **Area I2** and an additional 1,000 experience points if they return to Meadowvale to begin the process of rebuilding the road. Finally, returning Valcio the Merchant to the surface is worth an additional 1,000 experience points.

FROST AND FIRE

Fire and Ice, Cold and Heat; it is all so obviously childish and ludicrous. It is all the same to me – to us. Let the fools kill each other. Let them fight for what they think is a prize. The Dark Cave awaits those who fall.

The Player Characters continue their descent into Mount Moru, this time searching for Aedhaine's son Aogarn, survivor of the Morudhain massacre. This chapter has the Player Characters entering dungeon areas **J** and **K**, where the Moru giants make their lairs... and their wars.

The Feud of the Clans

There has always been some rivalry between the frost and fire giant tribes of Mount Moru. The bloodthirstiness of both races, combined with their radically different approaches to raid and murder, made them prone to fight among themselves, wherever they lived, ever since both races can remember. However, there have been no records of a war between both races as hateful and enduring as the Feud of the Great Pit.

LEGEND OF THE GREAT PIT

It started with the legend. Both fire and frost giants claim theirs was the original version, though in truth nobody knows which race told it first. In any event, the legend tells of a Great Pit, created by the giant gods to test the mettle of their favoured children. This pit is an impossible landmark – a bottomless abyss located inside a mountain, in a place that is both freezing cold and fiery as Hell. It is said the frost and fire giants shall long fight over this pit; however, when one of the tribes wins, it will earn the right to enter the pit and reach the netherworld, where every member of the tribe shall be granted the gift of immortality. Both the fire and frost giants told legends of how their own race found the pit and routed the others in a great battle, entering Hell and becoming gods afterwards.

THE DISCOVERY

For centuries, the legend remained as such, having no significance beyond an assertion of superiority from both giant races. However, a few years ago an astonishing discovery shook the cultures of both frost and fire giants – during a half-hearted, ritual battle between bands of both races that had encountered

each other in the Moru tunnels, they all stumbled onto it at the same time – a great cave, located exactly in the middle of a zone of unnatural cold and an inexplicably hellish tunnel; in the exact middle of the cave floor, there was a wide, black pit, whose bottom could not be seen from the cave. Both the frost and fire giants realised immediately what they were seeing and leaped against each other with increased, almost desperate bloodlust; however, both sides were so intent on winning that the battle had to be declared a draw.

THE HALF-PEACE

During the following weeks, dozens of giants from both races died in the furious battle to take over the legendary pit. After the death toll started threatening the continued existence of their people, the frost and fire giant chiefs opted for an alternate solution: each race would claim one half of the cave and dig a dwelling on its half. Thus both races would constantly watch each other with neither taking control of the pit, limiting the fights to a few scheduled, ritual confrontations. Both races agreed to this plan, known as 'the Half-Peace' ever since, and the dwellings were built; the giants closed all the passages leading to the cave and dug two tunnels, one from each half, both leading into the mountain base (**Area I**), so as to ensure neither tribe would exit the caves except by those two tunnels. When both dwellings had been built, a selection of elite giants from each tribe was chosen to man the corresponding half of the cave – the Feud of the Clans had begun...

MALADREV AND ANATRI

A couple of years before the promulgation of the Half-Peace, two giants, one from each tribe, came of age at the same time the Great Pit was discovered. Both of them, upon reaching adulthood, were manifesting draconic traits, the same that have become increasingly common among Moru creatures of all races and species. They gradually became strong and feared leaders of their respective clans, their draconic traits making them stronger, tougher and more fearsome than their kin. The fire giant was a brutal fighter called Maladrev; the frost giant was the priestess Anatri and they became instant enemies as soon as they learned from each other's existence. Afterwards, they fought each other on so many occasions they got to know each other, with their quirks, strengths and weaknesses, almost as well as

if they had been lovers; the goal in each of their lives was to destroy, defeat and humiliate the other. They were, of course, the ones chosen as leaders of the two clans that would occupy each half of the Great Pit.

THE FEUD TODAY

Currently, the so-called Feud of the Clans has become much less bloodthirsty than before, as battles between both giant races are only allowed at ritual times. This, of course, has not stopped the forces of Maladrev and Anatri from battling each other constantly, with all the strength of their hate. Ritually, the dead are thrown to the Great Pit, so they gain immortality when their side achieves victory; this has been another factor to stop the battles – neither side wants to send too many of their enemies to potential godhood.

The Cult of Darkness

As the Feud of the Giant Clans raged on, something else was happening in the caves below – something darker, which gave the situation a much more sinister implication...

THE CULT OF THE CAVE

It all started when the Cult of the Cave, a primitive, pre-Morudhain religion, started gaining adepts among the Mount Moru nonhuman races. The Cult stated that the cave was a providing god, which protected mortals with its walls and ceiling while it hid them from danger with its darkness; however, the cave was also a cruel master, for it demanded sacrifice and death in exchange for its protection – as it represented shelter, it also represented the monstrous maw of the infernal depths. More details about the Cult of the Cave can be found in page 21 of *The Dragon Stone*.

TAWUNN TAMESTONE

One of these nonhumans that adopted the cult of the Cave was Tawunn Tamestone, a wise but bitter stone giant hermit, whose soul had become blackened by self-imposed solitude. He became a worshipper of the Cult's harshest aspect, casting dark curses and summoning evil spirits in the name of the Cave.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CULT

Tawunn came to a clan of formerly peaceful stone giants and performed his dark arts for them, until he gained their respect and solicitude. Within a year, he had become their leader and twisted their unassuming natural cult to cave deities into a dark worship. Before

they knew it, Tawunn's stone giant clan was serving the powers of darkness.

THE DARKDELVING

Tawunn had learned of the existence of a dark pit of utmost evil, an abyss connecting to Hell itself, somewhere in the deepest caves below Mount Moru. A great, bottomless cave of evil was the ideal to which Tawunn had aspired all his life; therefore, he sought this pit far and wide, until he indeed found it. The pit, known by local creatures as the Darkdelving, was located in the deepest level of an unimaginably deep cavern complex below Mount Moru – The Dark Warrens. Tawunn and his clan began making sacrifices to the Darkdelving and established a truly evil culture on the fringes of its evil depths.

SPAWN OF THE WYRM-WORM

Tawunn's Cult of Darkness had become so evil and so devoted to the utter darkness of the abyss that the Dark Forces sent a messenger to him – a creature built of pure darkness, a spawn of the Wyrms-Worm of the Depths (see **Area P15** in page 127 of *The Path of Archaneroth*). This spawn, this avatar of evil, appeared to Tawunn Tamestone as a sign that his prayers had been heard and he would soon have the chance to do great deeds of destruction in the name of the Bottomless Cave.

THE GREAT PIT

As if to underline the message of the Darkdelving's spawn, an important event took place mere days after his appearance – the fire and frost giants from the outer mountain tribes discovered the Great Pit that served as the entrance for the stone giants' lair. It turned out the pit fulfilled the exact conditions of a certain prophecy of frost and fire giant folklore; therefore, the giants took over the pit and began a ritual war to fight over it. This meant Tawunn's time had come; he would cause such a blood war, as it had never been seen in the region, and bring the bleeding souls of both giant tribes as a sacrifice to his Dark God.

War of the Pit

The true War of the Pit began when Tawunn Tamestone appeared before both Maladrev and Anatri, making sure they saw him emerge from the pit. Tawunn claimed that he and his clan were the guardians of the pit and would be the judges of the conflict; they would take the bodies and souls of the dead and sacrifice them to their dark gods to see if they were worthy of immortality – and they would

Chapter Guide: Frost and Fire

This chapter can be a brutal blood-fest or a complex diplomatic situation, depending on how Player Characters handle it. It is also the first chapter where the Player Characters visit the true depths *below* the roots of Mount Moru and not only the mountain's interior.

Expected Character Level: At this point, Player Characters should be at least 10th level. 12th or higher level characters should enter the adventure at a later point, as indicated in the **Chapter Guide** sidebar of each of the following chapters.

PLAYING FROST AND FIRE AS A SEPARATE ADVENTURE

Frost and Fire may be played as a separate scenario for 10th to 11th level characters. To introduce Player Characters directly to this chapter, start the adventure as normal (see **The Road Begins**, page 8), eschewing all references to Aedhaine's tribe, the goblins, the Haunted Lake, Stonehold or the Temple of Iri's Moru expedition; the Meadowvale Non-Player Characters say nothing about any of these subjects. Instead, everybody is talking about the increased giant activity in Mount Moru these last months. See also **Adapting the Adventure Further**, below, for important modifications to the adventure.

Character Hooks

If playing **Frost and Fire** separately, use one of the following options to hook the characters into the adventure:

- The merchants using the Moru Pass (see **Adapting the Adventure Further**, below) pay the Player Characters are paid to enter Mount Moru and find what they can about the giants.
- The Player Characters are casual travellers or hired guards with one of the caravans crossing **Area I** (see **Adapting the Adventure Further**, below) when the giant Eern (**I16**) attacks the convoy. After the encounter with Eern is resolved, the caravan masters ask the Player Characters to investigate where did the giant come from.

Adapting the Adventure Further

When running **Frost and Fire** independently, apply the following modifications to the main story:

- Remove Aurelia (page 11), Cormac Drake (page 12), Rann Shieldborne (page 13) and Wolf/Aurebaor (page 14) from the adventure.
- Assume the blockage to **Area I2** has been removed and Lost Pass junction is open again; this means that trading caravans can now march straight across the base of Mount Moru instead of losing weeks upon weeks going around it.
- There are no encounters in **Area I**; assume the entire level to have been cleaned and emptied, except for Eern's Post at **I16**.
- The access at **I1** does not exist; **I1** is just an empty cave.
- The secret passage at **K14** leads back to the surface, not to **Area L**.

be the judges that determined who would win in the end. Both Anatri and Maladrev believed Tawunn's words blindly, as they *did* see him come out of their sacred pit; therefore, they submitted to the judgment and beliefs of the stone giants living below them.

With the arrival of Tawunn, the war has taken on a much more sinister quality. Frost and fire giants murder, spy and stalk each other constantly, making any excuse to fight clandestinely, out of the allowed rituals, doing as much harm to the other side as

possible. The tribes of fire and frost giants all around the mountain have been forced to send replacement members to both bands time and again; neither race can keep this up for long...

Anatri's Plan

A few days ago, Anatri came up with a plan. If the war had become about breaking the rules, she decided to gain the upper hand by breaking the greatest rule possible and, in the boldest move in her life, she sent

two of her best frost giant warriors climbing down the sacred pit itself, until they reached the stone giants' lair. They found the caves unguarded, so sure were the stone giants of their power over their neighbours, and managed to reach the main cave undetected. There, they took the two nearest children they could grab and brought them kicking and screaming back up into their lair, after leaving a message carved on the stone giants' wall – Anatri had the hostages and she wanted to be given control of the pit at once.

Tawunn's Revenge

When Tawunn learned of Anatri's deed, he forbade his giants from attempting to rescue the children, for whose lives he obviously did not care a bit. However, he decided this had gone on long enough and decided to end everything at once. Anatri gave him a week to think things over; currently, he is just waiting for the week to pass before summoning the spawn of the Darkdelving and asking it to come out from the pit and slay each and every last one of the frost giants, so they learn the Power of the Pit is not to be taken lightly. Anatri does not know anything of this – she firmly believes it is only a matter of days before she has won the battle.

Enter the Player Characters.

Chapter Sections

The adventure begins as soon as the Player Characters enter **Area I16** heading east towards **I17** or **I18**; then, it leads the Player Characters to the lair of either the frost or fire giants, where they learn of the Feud of the Clans and, perhaps, of the stone giants taking advantage of the situation. Adventure sections include the following:

The Entrance: Here the Player Characters cross from **Area I** to **Area J** by either of the accesses (the ones leading to either the fire giant caves or the frost giant lair). Here they face Eern the frost giant unless they have already done so.

The Giant Caves: This section has the Player Characters exploring either or both of the fire or frost giant caves and facing the Feud of the Giant Clans from the inside.

The Dark Warrens: The real bad guy of the situation lives among the stone giants of the Dark Warrens; in this section, the Player Characters are likely to face him and be forced to make a decision...

The Entrance

Area I16 is an underground pass leading to the two tunnels that serve as an entrance for the Giant Caves (**Area J**). A few days ago, Anatri stationed one of her best scouts to watch this entrance. This section of the adventure is intended only to introduce the Player Characters to the adventure and to have them face Eern in case they have not done so already.

BESTING

If Eern (see below) is disabled, his watch post (**Area I16**) above the pass is an excellent and safe place for the party to rest and recover their strength.

EERN

If the Player Characters have not fought the frost giant scout already, they face him now as they try to go through the pass he is protecting. The encounter with Eern is detailed in **Area I16** (page 63 in *The Path of Archaneroth*).

FROM HERE

Unless the Player Characters wish to back out and return to **Area I** or outside, their two choices are basically **E17** (which leads to the Fire Giant Cave) or **E18** (which leads to the Frost Giant Lair).

The Giant Caves

This area is an unobvious display of duality in all senses; not only the temperature opposites make it obvious but also the architecture – the fire giants had a lot of natural space to expand, so the little digging they needed was made sloppily and crude, making it look like a natural cave rather than a civilised delving. Conversely, the frost giants were forced to carefully chip and measure the icy rock on their side so as to build a delving that adapted to their needs.

While the Player Characters remain in The Giant Caves, follow the area descriptions and encounters from **Area J: The Giant Caves**, as detailed in page 64 of *The Path of Archaneroth*, including the area's special temperature conditions.

THE MISSION

If the Player Characters have been asked to investigate the increasing giant activity, their mission is indeed to explore the Giant Caves, face the giants and find out what has been happening. Otherwise, their mission is simply to advance deeper inside the dungeon and find an access to the lower levels, which requires finding

FROST AND FIRE

the Giant Caves' exit (that is, the Great Pit amidst the caves).

EXPLORING THE GIANT CAVES

It is very hard to be stealthy in these closed, stifling quarters full of giant guards; for that same reason, however, it is a bad idea *not* to be stealthy. If the Player Characters let their presence in the caves be known, they are rushed by all the giant guards in their half of the Giant Caves. If they are in the fire giant side, their attackers are all the fire giant guards from **J3**; if they are in the frost giant side, they must face all the frost giant guards from **J2**.

If the Player Characters cause too much trouble or completely defeat this first wave of attackers, the giants send a second wave – the guards from **J9** in the fire giant side; in the frost side, it is the guards from **J6** plus four additional adult frost giants from **J10**.

If they cause enough of a commotion so as to summon the second wave of attackers on either side, the giants from the other side cannot help but noticing and decide to take advantage of the situation. After a short, brutal battle, the giants the Player Characters were attacking first are exterminated to the last tribe member, except for their leader (Anatri or Maladrev), who is taken prisoner.

DEFEATED

If the Player Characters are defeated, their fate depends on where they were defeated. If it was in the fire giant side, they are most probably downed in battle; if it happened in the frost giant side, they are most probably taken prisoner, either to share the children's cell at **J8** or as Anatri's slaves at **J14**.

DIPLOMACY

A diplomatic approach is always possible, though the Player Characters will have to be *very* convincing to earn the attention of creatures that feel superior to them in every sense and have no need to respect them. Their best bet is to take sides; by succeeding on a Diplomacy check (DC 20), they may convince one of the two leaders they are willing to help against the other.

THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY

If the Player Characters help one of the two giant bands to defeat the other, the winning leader wants to know them and give them a 'reward' for their help – namely, killing the Player Characters and throwing them to the pit so they can achieve immortality, unless

the Player Characters ask for a more cheap reward, like simply being allowed to go. Both Maladrev and Anatri are rotten to the core but either of them would be grateful enough with the Player Characters so as to let them go. If the Player Characters bother the winning giant leader in any way, they are made prisoner (see below) along with the other giant leader and put in the corresponding cell.

PRISONERS

If the Player Characters are made prisoners at any moment, they are chained to **Area J8** (in the frost giant side) or **Area J11** (in the fire giant side). It bears noting the stone giant children are being kept at **Area J8**.

BESTING

It is quite difficult to find an adequate place to rest in this level, both because of the giant patrols and because the temperature extremes. Player Characters wishing to rest are better off leaving the area and returning to **I16**, which is much safer and more comfortable.

THE CHILDREN

Anatri intends to use the stone giant children being held at **J8** as a bargaining chip against Tawunn Tamestone (see page 62). If the Player Characters help them escape, the children refuse to move or talk; it will require a lot of sweet-talking and convincing from the Player Characters to get the children to say they cannot flee because the unnatural cold trap on the frost giant side of the Great Pit. To get the children to accept being rescued, the Player Characters must use cold resistance items or spells *and* escort the kids to the Great Pit, which requires them to cross a series of passages potentially full of frost giant guards. If the Player Characters have no cold protection magic, the children suggest that 'the fire giants on the other side' have plenty.

If the Player Characters manage to lead the children to the pit, they still refuse to go down unless the Player Characters carry them down – after all, the youngsters cannot climb that long. The rules for climbing down the pit are detailed in **Area J16** (page 70 in *The Path of Archaneroth*).

SAVED

If the Player Characters succeed in carrying the stone giant children safely back home, proceed to **The Dark Warrens** below, noting that the Player Characters are returning the hostages home.

Maladrev

There is a 75% the fire Giant King can be found in his throne room (**J13**) and a 25% he is with his concubines at the **J15** secret room. If the Player Characters have revealed their presence in the caves and showed hostile intentions, Maladrev automatically retreats to **J15** to wait the crisis out.

ENCOUNTERING MALADREV

When the Player Characters are facing Maladrev, he acts as if he really was a king and not the leader of an elite squad. He is cold, calculating and ruthless, while maintaining a tough-guy pride at all times. He does not intend on allowing the Player Characters the upper hand in any sense, be it in a diplomatic deal or a fight. If the Player Characters attack him, he retaliates with all the resources at his disposal. The statistics of Maladrev can be found in the **Appendix**.

DEALING WITH MALADREV

If the Player Characters offer a deal to Maladrev, he immediately demands they show their good will by scouting the frost giant side and discovering the secret 'that snow cow Anatri' is hiding. Maladrev knows Anatri is up to something but he does not know what it is; Anatri's 'secret' is, of course, the stone giant children she is keeping hostage. Revealing this blasphemy to Maladrev would give him the excuse to ignore the rules once and for all and make an all-out strike against Anatri, which is something he has been itching to do ever since the Half-Peace (see page 56) was declared. If the Player Characters double-cross Maladrev in any way and he finds out, he orders them taken prisoner (see above) and thrown to the Great Pit (**J16**).

Anatri

Anatri is usually found in her room at **J14**; if she is not there, she can be found at the common rooms in **J10**.

ENCOUNTERING ANATRI

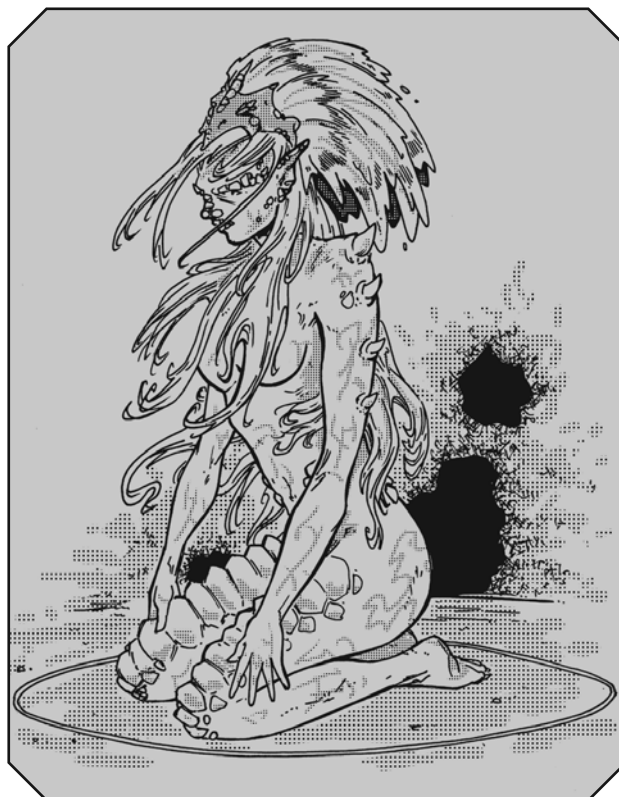
The frost giant matriarch is a sly and cunning woman, prone to talk a lot but saying wise things most of the time. She is very intense and spiritual, trying all the time to see through the Player Characters' souls. If the Player Characters attack her, she blows on her war horn to summon her guard (all adults from **J10**, which arrive in 1d3 rounds, and all guards from **J2**, which arrive in 1d6 rounds) and then starts casting spells. Anatri's statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

DEALING WITH ANATRI

If the Player Characters offer a deal to the frost giant priestess, she requires they show their honesty by scouting the fire giant side and discovering Maladrev's treasure room. She, like everyone, knows Maladrev has a treasure room and is hiding it but she does not know where. If the Player Characters accept the mission, she bids them go immediately but declares she shall be keeping one of them hostage while the rest undertake the mission, so as to make sure they will not try to betray her to Maladrev or keep the treasure to themselves. If the Player Characters refuse or double-cross her in any way, she blows on her horn to call the closest guards from **J2** and orders the Player Characters taken captive and carried to **J8** with her stone giant children hostages. If they accept the mission and carry it out satisfactorily, she also orders them taken captive but not until they have given her the information about Maladrev's treasure room.

EXITING AREA J

Other than the two passages leading to **I17** and **I18**, the only exit from **Area J** is the Great Pit at **J16**.



The Dark Warrens

The Dark Warrens are the deepest known level of the Moru underground, many miles below the mountain base. Many scholars know of their existence, though virtually none have visited them. Nor would they want to – the Dark Warrens are nothing but a descending sequence of chasms upon chasms and abysses upon abysses, which lead all the way down to a bottomless, dark pit leading directly to Hell; this is where Tawunn Tamestone brought his stone giant followers and established his Cult of Darkness.

While the Player Characters remain in the Dark Warrens, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area K: The Dark Warrens**, as detailed in page 70 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

If the Player Characters are here investigating giant activity, their task is either to deliver the stone giant children or to face Tawunn Tamestone and find out what does he want and what is he up to. If they are just passing through, their only task is, as always, to find the access to the next level – and survive.

EXPLORING THE STONE GIANT CAVE

As soon as the Player Characters enter **Area K2**, they are greeted by stone giant guards, who demand they lay down their weapons and allow themselves to be escorted to the presence of Moraeus Mortar-Soul (**K3**) or Tawunn Tamestone (**K6**). If the Player Characters behave peacefully, they are taken first to **K3** and then, if Moraeus deems it necessary, to **K6**; proceed to the corresponding sections of **Area K** in *The Path of Archaneroth*.

If the Player Characters attack the stone giants openly, the giant guards from areas **K2**, **K3** and **K4** leave their chambers and rush to meet the threat. If forced to, the giants at **K5** also fight; otherwise they allow their guards to do their job. If the Player Characters succeed in bringing about a **Revolt** (see below), it is even possible the **K4** and **K5** giants help them, instead of hindering them.

If the Player Characters are defeated, Tawunn Tamestone orders them fed to his worm (**Area K12**).

RESTING

If the Player Characters earn the stone giants' goodwill, they are indeed allowed to rest anywhere they wish

within the stone giant caves (**K1** to **K6**). Everywhere else in the Dark Warrens is quite dangerous – in fact some areas, such as the Darkdelving itself (**K13**), are deadly just by *being* in them.

TAWUNN TAMESTONE

It is highly likely the Player Characters are taken to Tawunn Tamestone a few minutes after arriving to the Dark Warrens, unless they violently resist it. If they come as intruders, they will be led to him brusquely and distrustfully; if they come as friends, for example by having saved the children hostages from **J8**, they will be led to him as heroes – in any event, they will most likely be led to him.

If the Player Characters behave peacefully, Tawunn Tamestone allows them to leave unharmed as long as they do not interfere with his plans; he does not allow them to continue west to **K7** for any reason, as his Cult considers the western area of the Dark Warrens a sacred place.

If the Player Characters show respect for the Cult of Darkness and succeed on a Diplomacy check (DC 28), they may convince Tawunn Tamestone they are on his side. If this is the case, he tells them about his plan to release the Darkdelving spawn upon the frost giants for their affront; if the Player Characters offer their help, Tawunn accepts to give them a mission – to go and slay Anatri, the frost giant matriarch. Tawunn thinks believes that, if they succeed, the exemplary punishment against Anatri shall be enough to teach the frost giants a lesson and he will not need to summon the Darkdelving avatar. Tawunn offers 3,000 gold pieces in exchange for Anatri's head. He offers no reward for saving the children nor does he ask the Player Characters to do it; however, some of the other stone giants may ask for it if they learn about the Player Characters' mission.

If the Player Characters attack Tawunn Tamestone, he defends himself but also calls his closest **F2** guards; if the Player Characters lose, they are fed to Tamestone's worm (**Area K12**). If the Player Characters win, the stone giants automatically **revolt** (see below) against their remaining leader, Moraeus Mortar-Soul (see **Area K3**).

THE STONE GIANTS

Despite the dark cult and the master they serve, the stone giants at the Dark Warrens are not truly evil; they are not hostile to the Player Characters unless

directly forced to. With the exceptions of the guards at **K2** and both leaders – Moraeus at **K3** and Tawunn at **K6** – the stone giants of the Dark Warrens are peaceful folk, caught in circumstances beyond their control.

SAVED THE CHILDREN

If the Player Characters manage to safely return Anatri's children hostages from **Area J8**, all the stone giants, including Tawunn himself, are extremely grateful. Tawunn gives them 1,000 gold pieces for the deed and some of the other stone giants even praise the Player Characters against Tawunn, who not only did not move a finger to save the children but also forbade his men from doing it themselves.

REVOLT

Most of the stone giants are unsatisfied with Tawunn's leadership, as it is growing increasingly dark, cruel and out of control. The Player Characters may notice this situation by succeeding on a Sense Motive check (DC 20); if they want to take advantage of it, they must succeed at a Diplomacy check (DC 30) against the stone giants, preferably those at **Area K5**. If the Player Characters have saved the stone giant children, reduce the check DC by 5 points; if they killed Tawunn's worm, reduce it by another 5 points. If they attempt the check against the giants at **K2** or **K3**, increase the check DC by 5 points. If the check is successful, the stone giants rebel against Tawunn Tamestone, rushing his cave in an onslaught of fury. Tawunn's guards and closest collaborators, including Moraeus Mortar-Soul, recognise the winning side and turn against their master as well. This technically makes the Player Characters friends of the stone giants, allowed to explore the whole of **Area K** at their leisure.

AEATHON THE MAD

Aeathon the Mad is perhaps the mightiest giant to be found inside Mount Moru, yet he is also the most wretched. During an expedition to worlds that mortals were not meant to know, Aeathon met and fought an incredible cosmic force, a creature mightier than a god and as insane as chaos itself. Aeathon had no chance against such a cosmic force. Only a creature of near-godlike power would have survived that battle – Aeathon did; through a superhuman effort of will; yet his mind was forever destroyed by the ordeal. He came to live in a cave between dark caves and deep chasms, near the very pits of hell but not too near. There he has stayed ever since, sitting

among the rocks, too afraid to peer out, too hateful and unreasonable to accept visitors. In fact, any living creature that meets Aeathon's gaze must succeed on a Will save (DC equal to Aeathon's opposing Sense Motive check). If the save fails, Aeathon sense fear in the target and attacks; if the save succeeds, Aeathon accepts to parlay.

SPEAKING WITH AEATHON

There is not much sense in speaking with Aeathon, except for what he can say about the creature of chaos he fought when he lost his sanity. Apparently it was some titan, a force of utter bedlam and madness, which Aeathon thought himself mighty enough to challenge. If the Player Characters speak patiently and persistently with Aeathon, he ends up suggesting that titan creature 'is here, in the Mountain... he knows everything – he knows how to do what cannot be done... he knows how to mix the formulas... the formulas for everything... he knows how to create gods – he created me... I am a god! I AM A GOD!'

No matter how long or hard he is pressed about it, Aeathon does not reveal the titan-thing's name or location – he simply cannot. Furthermore, excessive insistence in this subject causes Aeathon to snap and attack his interlocutor immediately. Tawunn Tamestone visited Aeathon frequently, hoping to wring the information from him by being extremely subtle and patient, though he never succeeded.

EXITING AREA K

All the exits from The Dark Warrens are dark pits – the first one (**K1**) leads up to **J16** at the Giant Caves; the second, also known as the Darkdelving (**K13**), leads all the way down to Hell and to the caves of the Wyrms-Worm, although it may not be used by mundane means. Finally, there is a narrow pit at **K14**, leading up to **L1a** at the Drow Spire.

Ending the Chapter

Chapter five ends when the Player Characters have solved the giant problem, by dealing with one, two or all three of the giant leaders (Anatri, Maladrev and Tawunn).

Player Characters should have reached 13th level by the end of this chapter, after they receive all the appropriate story XP awards (see below); if they have not reached at least 13th level, the Games Master should try and encourage them to explore the giant

FROST AND FIRE

caves further so they can have a few more encounters and/or tie any loose ends. Potential hooks for the Player Characters to continue exploring the dungeon include:

- Did they truly deal with the Feud of Giant Clans? Did they take sides?
- Did they save the captured stone giant children? Did they return them home?
- Did Tawunn survive? Is his Cult of Darkness still active?
- Did they find the Darkdelving? Did they face the Nightwing?

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

The ending of the adventure depends on what the Player Characters decide to do:

- If the Characters took the side of either Maladrev or Anatri and killed the other, the winning giant takes over the pit and continues attacking the Moru Road caravans, which may cause the Player Characters to be called to solve the problem again.
- If the Player Characters took care of Tawunn but let the frost and fire giants alone, Maladrev and Anatri continue their endless struggle indefinitely, with neither side ever gaining the upper hand.
- If the Player Characters let Tawunn live, he makes good on his threat, summoning the Darkdelving spawn to kill Maladrev, Anatri and all of their people. He then takes control of the pit himself, using it as an upper access for his master's dark power. Unless the Player Characters stop him, he will fully subjugate the malcontents in his tribe and erect a dark realm of evil in the Dark Warrens, a realm through which nobody may pass.

- If Tawunn's people rebelled against him, they either feed him to his own worm (**Area K12**) or throw him over the cliff at **K8** (if Aeathon has been somehow removed from **K7**). In both cases, the Darkdelving spawn appears and delivers Tamestone from his final death, taking him to the depths of the Darkdelving where he shall pay for his sins.

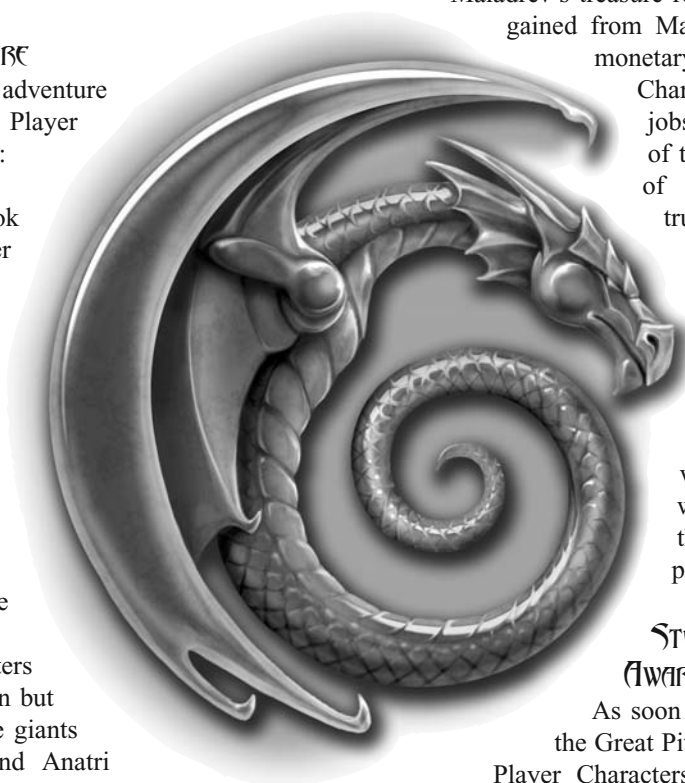
REWARDS

Other than the great loot at the giant Caves (such as Maladrev's treasure room), there is little to be gained from Maladrev or Anatri on the monetary side; though the Player Characters may remain doing jobs alternatively for either of them, it is unlikely either of the giant leaders will truly pay for their efforts.

Tawunn pays 3,000 gold pieces for Anatri's head and 1,000 gold pieces for the return of the children. If the Player Characters return to the Moru Road caravans with proof they have dealt with the giant problem, they receive 10,000 gold pieces as a reward.

STORY EXPERIENCE AWARDS

As soon as they manage to reach the Great Pit at **J16** the first time, the Player Characters earn 3,500 experience points just for having survived through the deadly climate of the Giant Caves. By the same token, they earn 4,000 experience points if they find the passage at **K14**, just for surviving through The Dark Warrens and their deadly pits. The Player Characters also gain 5,000 experience points if they solve the giant problem satisfactorily and an additional 5,000 experience points if they managed to instigate the **Revolt** among the stone giants. Saving the stone giant children nets them 2,000 experience points.



THE QUEEN OF DWERGARD

The Player Characters finally arrive to the underrealm below Mount Moru, the world below the world where the subterranean races build their cities, cultures and wars. There they meet dark elves, deep gnomes and deranged dwarves, and a woman that would be their queen...

A Lonely Girl

Taemorai was a lonely girl. She had never known her father; her mother was just a legend – a legend of adventure, daring expeditions and great deeds, yet a legend nonetheless. Taemorai did not even remember her as a physical being; rather, she her mother was a ghost, a vague spirit from the deep dungeons, high mountains and faraway lands. Alone in an elven castle, with only magical servants to keep her company, Taemorai created for herself an eerie, unreal world of strange imagery, where she lived every day, all day. She created dark dungeons in her mind for her mother to explore and terrible monsters to challenge and keep her mother away from home – and life went on...

THE SHADOW OF THE DRAGON

For many years, Taemorai dreamed her mother battled *her* monsters and adventured in *her* realm. Finally, the illusion was shattered when Taemorai discovered who she really was – and what her father was – the first day she spat acid and grew claws. This realisation temporarily broke her already tenuous hold on reality; before she knew, she had run away from her mother's sheltered elven castle and started a life as an adventurer herself. By the time she regained her bearings, she had already begun her path as an adventuring sorceress and, more importantly, she was free at last, free in the outside world – and discovered to her delight it did not scare her in the least. One thing gave her strength: she had learned to accept and even enjoy what she was... and she decided to take advantage of it.



The Dwerg Army

With time, Taemorai learned to channel and control her arcane gifts, becoming a very powerful sorceress. Her wisdom, however, was not up to par with her power; she always remained a spoiled, capricious girl at heart, prone to such displays as freezing volcanoes or slaughtering entire towns at a whim. Her latest fancy was, quite simply, to use her power to build a kingdom; a new realm where she would reign supreme. To this effect, Taemorai travelled to Mount Moru and explored its depths at length. Using her incredible power, she beat level after level of the dungeon, descending further and further until she reached an underground region inhabited by a whole nation of dwarves. These were nothing at all like the surface dwarves she knew, though – some of them were similar but grey of skin and dull of gaze, while some others were frantic, deformed, maddened little creatures whose dispositions had nothing to do with those of the creatures they resembled. Taemorai just loved these cute little freaks; she just *had* to subjugate them. She resolved to become their queen.

THE GRANITE KING

These strange underground dwarves had a chieftain – a brave, ruthless hero known only as The Granite King. With her many arcane powers, it was easy for Taemorai to kill the Granite King and replace him with a magical duplicate under her command. She then proceeded to lead her newly acquired army against the other dwarven tribes in the area, unifying them under a single banner and even a single race – the Dwerg.

The Dwerg

'Dwerg' was the word that these underground dwarf-like beings used to refer to their common kin; therefore Taemorai thought it was a perfect choice to name her

THE QUEEN OF DWERGARD

Chapter Guide: The Queen of Dwergard

This chapter includes several kinds of adventure, pacing and encounters; from all-out battle between Dwerg and gnome armies to stealthy sneaking through a dark elf fortress, from town downtime to dragon caves. It is one of the larger chapters in the saga, pitting the Player Characters against nearly everything the subterranean world has to offer.

Expected Character Level: Before beginning this chapter, Player Characters should be at least 13th level. Lower-level characters are well advised to adventure a bit more before entering Ogginnogg or The Drow Spire; characters of 15th or higher level should perhaps enter the mountain at a later point, as indicated in the **Chapter Guide** sidebar of each of the following chapters.

PLAYING THE QUEEN OF DWERGARD AS A SEPARATE ADVENTURE

If **The Queen of Dwergard** is played as a separate scenario, treat it as a long adventure for 13th to 14th level characters. To introduce Player Characters directly to this chapter, run the introductory encounter **Ordeals on Ogginnogg**.

CHARACTER HOOKS

If playing **The Queen of Dwergard** separately, use one of the following options to hook the characters into the adventure:

- One of the Player Characters has a relative in Ogginnogg, perhaps because he is a gnome (preferably a deep gnome) or for any other reason; assume he knows the location and method of activation of the Great Well entrance is (see page 71) and how to use it. The other Player Characters may be relatives or friends as well, otherwise assume they are just tagging along.
- A wounded, battered deep gnome appeared in Meadowvale last week; as he was tended to by town healers, he revealed the desperate situation in Ogginnogg to the ‘kind humans’ and asked for help in the name of the troubled city. The Meadowvale Township emitted a proclamation the next day – the city of Ogginnogg offers a 10,000 gp reward to anyone willing to save them from the drow. If the Player Characters accept the task, the deep gnome, called Neboril, guides them gladly to the Great Well entrance (see page 71).

ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE FURTHER

When running **The Queen of Dwergard** independently, the adventure starts in **Ordeals in Ogginnogg**, not **The Drow Spire**. Also apply the following modifications to the main story, unless the Games Master wishes to run Chapter Seven as well:

- The Great Gorge at **M17** is a bottomless abyss leading nowhere.
- The hidden access at **L1a** does not exist.
- The Great Well at Ogginnogg (see page 71) has not been condemned and remains accessible to the gnomes, though still hidden from the drow.
- The Ogginnogg gnomes do not pay with the Tear-shaped jewel; all their rewards are in hard cash.

newly founded nation – they would be the Dwerg. Through false orders issued by her puppet king, Taemorai gave the Dwerg a common racial pride, a system of coin and a new religion (she wanted to give them a new language but it proved too troublesome). When she had shaped her army up, she led them to other underground areas, seeking other subterranean races to start subjugating.

THE DWERG TODAY

Eventually, Taemorai’s Dwerg army stumbled upon a deep gnome settlement; a whole city, with thousands of inhabitants, called Ogginnogg. The city was already subjugated by a small band of opportunistic dark elves but Taemorai only saw this as an added thrill. She decided Ogginnogg was to be her army’s first stop; she had her Dwergs build a small fortress – the first Dwerg fortress, which shall be known as Dwergard. The fortress is located a few miles

THE QUEEN OF DWERGARD

southwest of the city, almost ready for a conquest war against the dark elves, with a full gnome city as the prize.

TAEMORAI TODAY

For all her enormous influence on the dwarves' lives, most of the Dweg are unaware that Taemorai even exists, believing they get their commands directly from their gods and their Granite King. Meanwhile, Taemorai has built quarters for herself in a secreted area behind the fortress' throne room; there, she lives and plots peacefully, without any of her subjects suspecting her all-pervading presence. While her followers were finishing Dwegard, she set to work in her laboratory, creating more doubles of the dead Granite King in case they are needed... or maybe just to kill time. So far, she has created eight doubles and counting...

Chapter Sections

If the Player Characters found the **K14** exit in Chapter Five, the chapter begins as soon as they use the passage to reach **The Drow Spire**; otherwise, use the **Ordeals in Ogginnogg** section as an introductory chapter. The following are the adventure sections making up the chapter:

The Drow Spire: In this section the Player Characters explore a fortress of the dark elves; they must fight through the dark elf ranks to find the exit.

Ordeals on Ogginnogg: This is the chapter's 'town' section, featuring the city of Ogginnogg where the Player Characters may get information, equipment and rest – or simply 'touch base' during the mission.

The Dwegard Caves: In this section, the Player Characters finally encounter Taemorai and her Dweg army, just as it has started its raid on both the gnomes and dark elves.

The Drow Spire

This fortress was formerly one of the many Athan outposts built to protect the Athan territories from the dangers of Mount Moru; years ago, a band of drow renegades from House Unh Aneghr took over the fortress and completely rebuilt it with their own architecture and techniques, burying most of the Athan tunnels and modifying those that remained to match their needs. The drow clan has used the fortress as a base of operations ever since, launching its raids and the conquest of the deep gnomes at Ogginnogg from there.

If **The Queen of Dwegard** is being run independently, the adventure does not start here; instead, proceed to **Ordeals in Ogginnogg**, below.

While the Player Characters remain in **The Drow Spire**, follow the area descriptions and encounters from **Area L: The Drow Spire**, as detailed in page 75 of *The Path of Archanerth*.

THE MISSION

If the Player Characters came here on the mission for the Ogginnogg gnomes, their task is to sabotage the drow fortress from the inside; if they arrive by accident from the access at **L1a**, their mission is to cross the Drow Spire and reach the **L13** exit alive.

EXPLORING THE DROW SPIRE

There are two ways into the Drow Spire: the main entrance (**L13**) and the hidden access at **L1a**. Using the main door to enter the Drow Spire activates an alarm in the entire building; however, the **L1a** access is hidden even from the Unh Aneghr, so it remains a good way to enter the area undetected. The main problem is that the hidden access is only accessible from the living hell of **Area K...**

ALTERNATE WAYS

Actually, there are two paths leading to the **L1a** access; the first – and the most obvious – is the **K14** entrance, though there is another – the tunnel complex connecting Areas **K**, **L** and **M**. A character that enters the lower tunnels from Webwind's cave (**L16**) or the Great Gorge at **M17** may attempt a Survival check (DC 35) to trace his path back to the Drow Spire through the tunnel complex; if the check is successful, the character has reached the tunnel that ascends to **L1a** after 2d4 hours of exploration. Sadly, only two creatures – Webwind (**L16**) and The Unearth (**M12**) know of the existence of this tunnel complex; furthermore, neither of them knows the tunnels connect to **L1a**.

DISCOVERED

It is difficult but not impossible to remain hidden from the drow and cross their fortress without being detected. If the Player Characters allow their presence in the Drow Spire to be noticed (for example by allowing a drow guard to escape and give the alarm), Matron K'lbanda orders a female drow squad (use the Unh Aneghr warrior-nun encounter described in **Area L6**) to deal with the commotion; if the Player Characters survive this, the special Unh Aneghr task force (described in **L4**) is sent after them. If the Player

THE QUEEN OF DWERGARD

Characters still survive, the Matron sends all the elite guard teams found in **L2** areas as well as all the female teams from **L6**. As a last resort, the Matron dons her full war attire and locks herself in her chambers surrounded by her bodyguards (see **Area L10**).

If the Player Characters attempt to escape the Fortress after having been detected, an elite guard team (**L2**) and a warrior-nun force (**L6**) are sent after them, making enough noise so as to warn the guards at **L9** of the Player Characters' presence.

DEFEATED

If the Player Characters let themselves be taken alive by the drow, they are brought to the presence of Matron K'lbana, who orders them given to the Spider-Goddess' avatar at **L11**; she, her bodyguards and her warrior-nuns gather at the **L10** balcony to see the execution.

RESTING

Due to the Unh Aneghr drow's privacy laws, any closed chamber is safe to rest and recover, provided the Player Characters have eliminated all threats from it; once any chamber is cleaned of dangers, Player Characters may rest there indefinitely without fear of random encounters – unless they have already been detected by the drow (see **Discovered**, above).

Matron K'lbana

The queen of the Drow Spire and leader of the Unh Aneghr clan is always found in her quarters at **L10**, where she has all the commodities she may aspire to, including a bevy of muscular drow males for her personal use, without ever needing to go out and look for it.

ENCOUNTERING K'LBANA

When the Player Characters encounter K'lbana in her room, it is 90% possible she is not wearing her armour or weapons, though she tries to make for them immediately. The Unh Aneghr matron is never willing to parlay or negotiate; she demands the Player Characters surrender or die, even if they find her half-naked and (apparently) defenceless in her bed. K'lbana's statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

NOTES

If the Player Characters get a chance to explore K'lbana's desk, they find reports about the Dwerg army and their amassing at the Dwergard fortress. These reports include specific notes about the Dwerg

army such as the fact it is made up of duergar and derro joined together in a single culture, and worshipping both their deities as a divine duality. The notes also include indications – though not a map – of how to reach **Area M** from the city of Ogginnogg, as well as K'lbana's personal thoughts on the subject, like the unsettling unlikelihood of derro and duergar collaborating so openly, even sharing their religions.

K'lbana's Diary

K'lbana's diary, a notebook with the Unh Aneghr symbol (a rampant spider on a purple background) on the cover, tells the story of the clan from the Matron's point of view, making emphasis on her dreams to establish and independent power for the glory of her House. The story goes something like this:

House Unh Aneghr, a decadent drow clan of pampered nobles and jaded dilettantes from the great drow house Narrishtah (mentioned in *The Tome of Drow Lore* by Mongoose Publishing). The Unh Aneghr drow were famed for their physical and social excesses, as well as their grisly, unseemly ways to deal with ennui; they also worshipped a blasphemous variation of the cult of the Dark mother, which they called the Spider-Goddess' church. When the Unh Aneghr excised themselves from House Narrishtah, they were a decadent elite – a few score of drow nobles of the highest power and training, ready to command an army yet lacking a purpose to do so. It was Matron K'lbana who came up with the idea of seeking an abandoned Athan fortress and adapting it as their new home. They settled in what is known as the Drow Spire about ten years ago, nearly at the same time Aedhaine and her tribe settled in the upper mountain levels. It did not take long for them to discover the deep gnome city of Ogginnogg and subtly take over it by infiltrating and taking out their leaders. Now, the gnome city is their main source of resources and wealth, mostly slaves. Recently, the drow clan noticed the arrival of a new force to the area – the city of Dwergard, manned exclusively by derro and duergar. K'lbana is sure this will lead to conflict sooner or later; she of course expects the winner will claim the control of Ogginnogg and of the entire surrounding territory – and she does not plan to relinquish her power to the dwarves.

The Spider-Goddess

When the Unh Aneghr arrived to the Drow Spire, they had brought with them a prize from above – a gigantic spider, captured at the **I4** caves in the Resting Place (see Chapter Four). This enormous spider was

THE QUEEN OF DWERGARD

not a common member of its species; it was the spawn of the union between the other great spider at the cave (see **Area I4**) and the dragon Webwind. For the Unh Aneghr, the draconic features of the spider-spawn were a mark of divinity and so they took it with them, to be worshipped at their lair as the avatar of their Spider-Goddess. This half-dragon monstrous spider is kept at the Unh Aneghr's gladiatorial pit (**Area L11**). After a while, the Unh Aneghr took their great spider to Webwind's cave and beseeched for the dragon to mate with it, so their avatar would have a progeny of its own. Webwind accepted after appropriate tribute was offered, and soon the Spider-Goddess' avatar had its own brood, which is also kept inside the Drow Spire (**Area L7**). Matron K'lbana wishes to create a strain of half-dragon spiders, to train as war mounts and pets worthy of the Unh Aneghr's superior breeding.

The Kanahraun

Besides the Unh Aneghr elves, the Drow Spire area is home to another dark elf tribe; in fact it was the presence of this other tribe that attracted the Unh Aneghr to the site, intent on evicting their kin from the area just out of spite. These original occupants of the area are Kanahraun drow, members of a clan of cannibalistic outcasts from the dark elf race. The Kanahraun are barbarous throwbacks, true savages of the underrealm; both them and their god Azzanoth the Glutton are described at length in the *Tome of Drow Lore* by Mongoose Publishing.

THE KANAHRAUN IN AREA L

The savage drow settled in this area very shortly before the Unh Aneghr; their claim to ownership of the zone is as tenuous as that of their neighbours; however, they are not at all happy with the Unh Aneghr's occupation of the Dark Spire; as a result, they have systematically caught and eaten every Unh Aneghr drow they have stumbled upon.

The local Kanahraun still worship their god Azzanoth, though they also pay homage to Webwind the dragon (see below).

ENCOUNTERING THE KANAHRAUN

It is very difficult to get the Kanahraun in a cooperative mood. They have observed a strict custom of attacking and eating everything not Kanahraun for centuries; it would be near impossible for them to stop now. However, they are angry enough at the Unh Aneghr so it is possible to stir them up against their neighbours.

By succeeding at a Diplomacy check (DC 35) against Sahj, the Kanahraun shaman at **L14**, a character may convince the savage drow that the Unh Aneghr are the common enemy and that they are the true owners of the Drow Spire, a fate of which the Unh Aneghr cheated them. There may be other ways to convince the Kanahraun to turn against their neighbours; the Player Characters may have their own choice about how to do it.

INTER-TRIBE WAR

If the Kanahraun are stirred to action against the Unh Aneghr, either by the method described above or by another means of the Player Characters' devising, they bash down the Drow Spire door and wipe out the students and guards at **Area L3**. However, they are not able to advance beyond that point, as the gathered Unh Aneghr forces ultimately make short work of them and their invasion. This means the end of the Unh Aneghr Pain Class (**Area L3**) and also of the Kanahraun's presence in the area; furthermore, it has a secondary consequence – the main door to the Drow Spire has been destroyed, allowing the Player Characters to enter the Unh Aneghr base by the main door without raising an alarm. After the battle, the Player Characters have 1d6 hours to enter the Drow Spire before an elite guard squad is dispatched to **L3** and about 24 hours before the door is rebuilt.

Webwind

The dragon Webwind is known to the drow for having mated with the monstrous spiders at **I4** and **L11**, producing a breed of half-dragon monstrous spiders the Unh Aneghr intend to use for war.

Basically, Webwind is an adventurer in the broadest sense of the word; contrary to most black dragons, he has been known to travel out of the swamp frequently, seeking thrills and emotions elsewhere. He has left his progeny scattered far and wide, never staying with a mate more than a few days, which may be the reason why he has more than ten children only in these levels of the dungeon – the eleventh being of course Taemorai, the sorceress of Dwergard.

THE LOWER TUNNELS

Webwind arrived to his cave through a series of half-drowned tunnels that connect the passage at **Area K14** with the Great Gorge at **M17** and many other underground areas that reach far beyond Mount Moru; when he wishes to leave his cave, he simply uses these passages to come and go undetected by his

THE QUEEN OF DWERGARD

drow neighbours or any other Mount Moru creature. These tunnels could be used as the basis of another adventure, involving dungeon travel outside the Mount Moru map; in this chapter, they are important as an alternative entrance into the Drow Spire (see **Exploring the Drow Spire**, above).

DEITY BY DEAL

Being the lazy rogue that he is, Webwind had no qualms about living comfortably off the backs of the Kanahraun drow that settled above his cave; he simply complained about the savage elves 'invading his territory' and lo, he got a monthly tribute. Currently he receives most of the food he needs from the Kanahraun, who almost worship him as a deity and also contribute offerings for the dragon's hoard. Needless to say the old lizard is delighted with the turn of events...

ENCOUNTERING WEBWIND

Generally, the dragon regards any intruder as a nuisance; he accepts to parley if asked to but then treats anyone entering his cave as an unwanted guest, suggesting they leave him for he is very busy to deal with them (which means he wants to sleep some more). Despite his sneering demeanour, Webwind is too lazy for combat, so he only gets violent if directly challenged, defied or attacked. The old dragon has been through the whole of Mount Moru, including the Dweggard Caves (**Area M**) and the Lightless Depths (**Area N**); he may give some general information about either area, particularly about the passages and tunnels coming in and out of them. Webwind is not well acquainted with the Dweg army or their leaders – little does he suspect the mastermind behind the Dweg army is her own daughter, for example (a character that has already seen Taemorai may notice Webwind has the exact same eyes via a successful Sense Motive or Spot check (DC 35)). Webwind's statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

R'thi

There is a Dweg spy hiding in a cave in this area (**L12**); a madman by name of R'thi. He is here with orders of gathering as many facts as he can from the Drow Spire and its forces; he has already acquired more information than he needed, including the entire structure of the Unh Aneghr lair (except for the secret access at **L1a**, of whose existence not even the drow know anything).

ENCOUNTERING R'THI

The mad derro spy simply does not parley; he attacks any intruder as sneakily as treacherously as possible, to capture and torture them later. The killer instinct is stronger than him; he cannot overcome the urge to attack. Therefore, the only way to get information from him is by rummaging among his belongings, where he hides a map of the entire Drow Spire and the surrounding area; this is a labelled version of the **Area L** map, indicating the exact contents of every area except for the **L1a** exit. R'thi also keeps a note with the following orders:

R'thi:

*Search drow tower
Gather information
Bring information back*

Even you can understand that.

*Hail the Granite King!
Glory to the Dweg Army!*

– *Sh'tagor*

EXITING AREA L

The only exits from here are the tunnels to Ogginnogg (**L9**), the secret access behind the Spider-Goddess' Altar (**L1a**) leading to **Area K14** in the Dark Warrens and the lower tunnels below Webwind's cave (**L16**), which may lead to either the secret Drow Spire access (**L1a**), the entrance at the Dark Warrens (**K14**) or the Great Gorge at the Dweggard caves (**M1**).

Ordeals on Ogginnogg

The city of Ogginnogg has stood between dungeon **Areas L** and **M** for nearly three centuries now, living peacefully and without problems for most of this time. Then the Unh Aneghr drow came, infiltrating the city and taking the ruling council hostage; now Ogginnogg continues as before, only its laws have been forcefully modified to allow the gnomes to be enslaved by the drow, plus some other equally monstrous regulations. At the moment of the Player Characters' arrival, the city is going through one of its darkest times...

ENTERING OGGINNOGG

The manner in which the Player Characters enter the gnome city depends largely on whether they are playing **Queen of Dweggard** separately or as Chapter

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Six of the full campaign. In the adventure is being played as a separate scenario, proceed to **The Great Well** below; otherwise, the Player Characters are assumed to simply have reached the city by walking here from **L9** or **M1** (continue on to **Exploring Ogginnogg**, below).

THE GREAT WELL

This section assumes the adventure is being played as a separate scenario and the Player Characters have been guided to the Great Well by a character that knows its location and activation method. If the Player Characters use the access paths at **L9** or **M1**, proceed directly to **Exploring Ogginnogg**, below. The Great Well is the secret access into Ogginnogg, the deep gnome city; in happier times, the gnomes used it to travel directly to the surface and back (see page 51 in *The Dragon Stone*). Currently, the Well is all but abandoned, as the deep gnomes do not wish to reveal its existence to their drow masters. However, it still works.

REACHING THE GREAT WELL

The uppermost exit of the Great Well is inside a cave, hidden among the rocks on the south-eastern slope of Mount Moru; finding the cave without knowing its location requires a successful Search or Survival check (DC 40). If the Player Character party includes

a member that knows the Great Well's location, this check is not necessary.

USING THE GREAT WELL

The Great Well is a great, 20 foot wide hole on the floor of this cave, with a spool and rope system that pulls up a great wooden 'bucket', specially fitted to carry up to 30 Small creatures. To use the Great Well, it is necessary to spin the large spool on the cave wall for about 30 minutes. After the required time has passed, the rope ends and the transporting bucket reaches the upper level; when all characters have boarded the lift, it is possible to control the descent via another spool inside the 'bucket'; finishing the descent all the way down to Ogginnogg takes a little less than 30 minutes.

Once the player Characters arrive at the deep gnome city by any means, proceed to **Exploring Ogginnogg** below.

EXPLORING OGGINNOGG

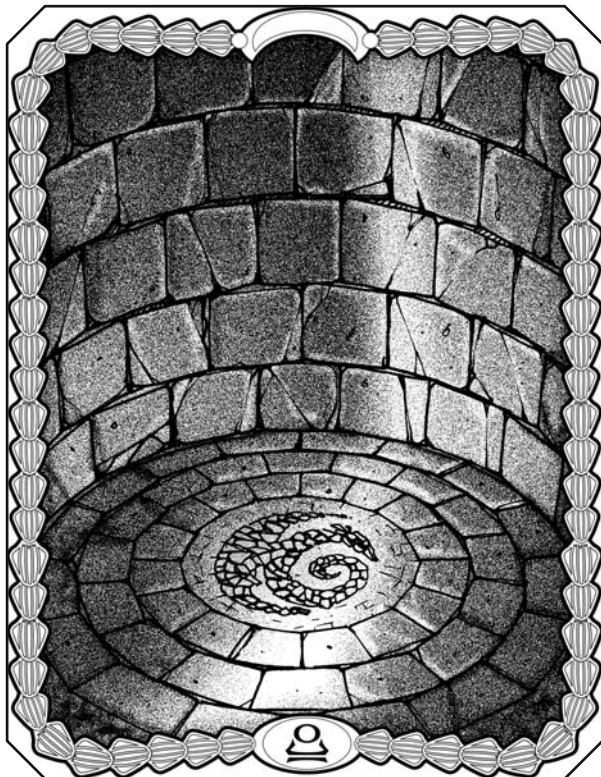
The city of Ogginnogg has been overtaken by drow; the dark elves of House Unh Aneghr (see **The Drow Spire** above) enslaved the city a few years ago and sent a detach of almost 100 dark elf soldiers to terrorise the populace and keep an iron grip on the government. Since the drow arrived to the city, they have enforced martial law and deep gnome slavery for the Unh Aneghr. Furthermore, they patrol the city constantly, so Player Characters are not as free to wander about as they may think; if they are seen openly on the streets, they are likely to attract the attention of the **Drow Guard** (see below).

While the Player Characters remain in Ogginnogg, use the city's description as it appears in page 50 of *The Dragon Stone*. The Player Characters should have free access to all the stores and Non-Player Characters in the city; most of the equipment appearing in the *Player's Handbook* can be acquired in Ogginnogg, as well as most of the standard lesser magic items found in the *DMG*, provided they have a cost of 3,000 gold pieces or lower. They may also rest at a local inn or get healing at the temple if necessary; it bears noting that any Player Character actively involved on a mission to help Ogginnogg against the drow gets a 50% discount on all services and equipment.

GATHERING INFORMATION IN OGGINNOGG

The following facts may be learned in Ogginnogg:

- If the Player Characters ask about current events, a successful Gather Information check (DC 25)



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reveals the current situation with the drow – the deep gnomes are scared to speak but they also see a ray of hope in the Player Characters’ interest in their plight.

- If the Player Characters ask about the area or its history, a successful Gather Information check (DC 30) reveals the Ogginnogg library keeps records about the times of the Athan Empire; these records include all the facts listed in **The Lost Kingdom of Atha** (see page 50 in *The Dragon Stone*).
- Finally, the deep gnomes did see Aogarn and his men as he passed through the city. A successful Gather Information check (DC 25) reveals a young human wizard with a sizeable retinue of armoured warriors, all of them apparently of Morudhain stock, came to Ogginnogg a few months ago and purchased some supplies before moving on to the depths. The gnomes did not pay much attention to the man’s eccentric behaviour, though he seemed quite driven indeed; they took him for yet another seeker of Athan Ruins and simply attributed his strangeness to the fact he was a human – uh, no offence...

DISCOVERED

If the Player Characters are anything but extremely discreet while they roam the city, they are bound to attract the attention of Ogginnogg’s Drow Guard; proceed to the **Drow Guard** section below.

THE MISSION

- If the Player Characters arrived to Ogginnogg at the instance, hiring or plea of a deep gnome, they are clandestinely taken to the Council of Lords, where they are briefed about the situation in a secret meeting.
- Otherwise, the Player Characters’ task is likely either to investigate the deep gnome city or to find the exit to **Area L** or **Area M**. They may learn about the situation by succeeding at Gather Information checks or actively asking the populace; if they decide to do something about the drow invasion, they are secretly taken to the Council of Lords at the first opportunity.

THE COUNCIL OF LORDS

If the Player Characters are taken to the Ogginnogg Council of Lords, the Lords immediately set up a clandestine, emergency meeting to brief the Player Characters about the Unh Aneghr and their cruel slavery laws. They also inform the Player Characters about the rather worrying concentration of dark

dwarves in ‘the southeast caves’ and the fortress they have just built there. If the Player Characters do offer to help, the Council of Lords expects them to perform two tasks:

- The Player Characters must deal with the **Drow Guard** (see below), either through open combat or via a more insidious strategic approach; the gnome Council agrees to anything as long as it succeeds in removing Daen’Syn and his men from the city. The deep gnomes provide any information needed, from the amount of members in the Drow Guard to the location of their barracks.
- The gnomes need the Player Characters to infiltrate the Unh Aneghr fortress (see **The Drow Spire** above), by any means possible – the gnomes recommend looking for an alternate or secret entrance into the spire or, if they decide to take a great risk, ask the help of ‘the Kanahraun drow in the caves south of the Drow Spire; the Kanahraun hate the Unh Aneghr with a vengeance and could be willing to help you – if they do not eat you first’ (see **The Kanahraun** in page 69). Once inside the Drow Spire, the Player Characters must investigate the drow spire, sabotage the Unh Aneghr’s forces as much as possible and, if they feel up to it, try and locate Matron K’Ibana (**Area L10**); if they secured her, they would cripple the Unh Aneghr’s forces.

The Ogginnogg Lords expect the Player Characters to undertake both of these quests, of course; however, the Player Characters may freely choose whether and when to perform each task. If necessary, the Council offers a 10,000 gp payment for each mission successfully accomplished.

A SPECIAL REWARD

As soon as the Player Characters carry out any of the above missions, the Ogginnogg Lords give them a strange gem in payment – a single, tear-shaped sapphire, worth *at least* 10,000 gold pieces. This is an otherwise normal, incredibly valuable gem; however, it might have some additional, secret properties. If the Player Characters carry out the second task, the reward for it is normal coin.

THE DROW GUARD

The force left by the Unh Aneghr to control Ogginnogg consists of 90 fully trained drow soldiers (Drow elf 1st level warriors, see ‘Elf’ in Chapter One of the *MM*), five of which are elite officers (the officers’ classes and levels are given in the **Playing in Ogginnogg**

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section in page 51 of *The Dragon Stone*). The entire drow force is based on a barracks in the western edge of town; also lodged in these barracks are Daen'Syn, the Unh Aneghr ambassador in charge of the entire force, and P'toech, the captain and leader of the guard. The statistics for both of these men are given in the **Appendix**.

BATTLING THE DROW GUARD

If the Player Characters attract the attention of the drow guard or confront them in any way, they are confronted first by 3d4 1st level drow warriors (see 'Elf' in Chapter One of the *MM*) plus one of the officers listed as members of the Drow Guard in page 51 of *the Dragon Stone*. The guards demand the Player Characters surrender or fight; if the Player Characters fight and win, after a few hours the whole city is put on alert and the Player Characters are sought and attacked by another 3d4 1st level guards plus another one of the five Drow Guard officers. If they fight and defeat this second encounter, next time they have to face a full complement of 24 1st level guards plus the three remaining drow officers; if they win again, the city is put under martial law and Captain P'toech himself (see **The Drow Guard**, below) marches to face the Player Characters with another 24 1st level guards, while ambassador Daen'Syn flees the city, headed to the Drow Spire to seek reinforcements. If the Player Characters also defeat Captain P'toech, they are considered to have dealt with the Drow Guard in Ogginnogg (see **The Mission**, below).

If the Player Characters surrender or are defeated by the Drow Guard at any time, they are taken before Captain P'toech, who processes them and orders them sent to **The Drow Spire** (see page 67), where they are presented to Matron K'lbona (see page 68) and made to fight in the dark elves' gladiatorial arena.

EXITING OGGINNOGG

There are three exits from Ogginnogg. The west road leads to **Area L** and the east road leads to **Area M1**; finally, the Great Well (see page 71) leads all the way up to the surface after a half-hour ascension; however, the Great Well access is only available if the Player Characters already know where it is and how to use it.

The Dwerlgard Caves

The fortress of Dwerlgard was just finished last month; now, Taemorai's Dwerlg army is ready to launch its invasion on Ogginnogg and, from there, on the Unh

Aneghr Drow Spire. The fortress is located in an unimaginably large underground cave, infested with derro, duergar and other dark underground denizens; if the Dwerlg army is not stopped, soon the whole cavern shall be drenched in the blood of underground folk.

While the Player Characters remain in the Dwerlgard Caves, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area M: Dwerlgard**, as detailed in page 87 of *The Path of ArchanerOTH*.

THE MISSION

If the Player Characters are here about Ogginnogg's problems and the Dwerlg Army, their task is to march southeast to the Dwerlgard fortress; otherwise, their only mission is to find a way to the lower levels from here, which shall probably require them to face the Dwerlg patrolling the entire zone.

EXPLORING THE DWERLGARD FORTRESS

When the Players reach the Dwerlgard Fortress, what they will find depends on their approach.

If they approach the fortress entrance, they have to face the defenders at **M3**; even if the Player Characters show peaceful intentions, they must succeed at a Diplomacy check (DC 40) for the furious derro at the door to contain their bloodlust just enough to hear them out; if the Player Characters wish to be allowed inside the fortress, they must succeed on another Diplomacy check (DC 40) *and* provide a good reason for the Dwerlg to allow them entrance.

If the Player Characters succeed at entering the fortress by force *and* get past the trap at **M4**, the entire fortress is put on alert unless the Player Characters have successfully hidden their intrusion. Note that slaughtering the guards at **M3** in open battle is *not* a successfully hidden intrusion. If the Player Characters reveal their presence, all guards located at **M2** and **M6** areas rush to meet the Player Characters and stop them wherever they are; also, the high priests at **M13** stand together awaiting the Player Characters' arrival and casting the appropriate combat spells in advance, while the Dwerlg officers at **M9** and **M11** lock themselves in their chambers. At this point, assume Taemorai (see below) is aware of the intrusion and prepared to meet the Player Characters.

THE SECRET ENTRANCE

Besides the main door, there indeed *is* a secret, unguarded entrance to the fortress. This entrance is a

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passage starting on the tunnel wall 60 feet to the north of the Uneath's tunnels (**Area M12**) and coming into the fortress through the middle of the west wall. The passage was secretly made by four renegade derro miners, who planned to desert the Dweg army, leave the fortress clandestinely and rebel against the Granite King. Unfortunately, these four derro were killed by the monster known as the Uneath as soon as they came out on its tunnel; as a result, the secret of the 'side entrance' into Dwegard was forever lost – along with the four hapless derro – inside the belly of the monster, which remains the only living creature that knows of this secret access.

ENTERING DWERGARD PEACEFULLY

If the Player Characters successfully enter peaceful negotiations with the Dweg, they are taken to either Sh'tagor or Mammheinar (both described in **Area M13**), the high priests of Dwegard; both the priests are very busy and upset about the Player Characters presence and attempt to get rid of them as soon as possible. The Player Characters are denied any request for an audience with the Granite King.

Hall of the Granite King

If the Player Characters enter **Area M14** forcefully and/or without having given opportunity for Taemorai to take measures against their intrusion, they find all eight Granite King simulacrums resting in the chamber; in this case, the doubles immediately attack.

If the Player Characters enter **Area M14** after having warned the fortress of their presence, assume Taemorai had time to recall seven of the doubles back to her room at **M16**, leaving only one Granite King in the hall; in this case, the Granite King simulacrum acts as an angry king and requests the Player Characters state their business briefly and leave at once, being as vague as possible in his answers, generally promising to 'think about' any proposal the Player Characters bring. The seven remaining simulacrums are encountered fighting alongside Taemorai in **Area M16**.

BESTING

Any closed room inside Dwegard, particularly the chambers at **M8**, is a suitable spot for rest and recovery; especially if the Player Characters lock it from the inside, since the Dweg respect privacy.

Taemorai

The final confrontation with the Dwegard Queen may take many forms and times. Taemorai is usually encountered in her laboratory at **M15**; the rest of the time she is simply lounging and scheming in her room (**M16**). She rarely ever leaves these chambers and *never* does it openly; her very existence is hidden from her own Dweg subjects, except for her eight Granite King doubles. Therefore, it is virtually impossible for the Player Characters to set up a scheduled meeting with Taemorai, as in all likelihood they do not know she even exists; the best possibility for this to happen is for Taemorai to detect their presence and become interested in them for some reason; in this case, she could introduce herself to them discreetly and attempt to deal with them for mutual convenience. However, Taemorai only does this if the Player Characters are interesting enough for her to risk blowing her cover and her scheme.

If the Player Characters let their presence at Dwegard be known in any way, assume Taemorai is prepared for their arrival; this means she greets them at her room (**Area M16**) in full combat attire, including her mother's sword and all her useful magic items, escorted by as many of her eight Granite King doubles as possible.

If the Player Characters catch Taemorai unaware, she is either at her laboratory at **M15** (65%) or her room at **M16** (35%), unescorted and unprepared.

In any event, any character that has encountered Webwind before is allowed a Sense Motive or Spot check (DC 35); if the check succeeds, it reveals Taemorai has the exact same eyes as the black dragon.

Although not brave to the point of stupidity, Taemorai is very stubborn and will not flee the battle gladly as it would mean admitting her weakness and defeat; instead, she does whatever she can to keep the upper hand and retreats only if the circumstances leave absolutely no other choice. If she is defeated (i.e., humiliated), she flees, harbouring an eternal hatred for the Player Characters and a grudge against them that will last as long as needed.

TAEMORAI'S DIARY

The diary of Taemorai, hidden in her room at **M16**, contains the full story described in **A Lonely Girl** and

The Dwergr Army (page 65), told from the viewpoint of Taemorai; it also gives clues that her father was a black dragon and she never knew him.

EXITING AREA M

The only exits from **Area M** are the Ogginnogg road at **M1** or the Great Gorge at **M17**, which leads to the **Lower Tunnels** (see page 69) or to **Area N1** in the Lightless Depths after an enormous, incredibly long descent.

Ending the Chapter

Chapter six ends as soon as the Player Characters find the Great Gorge and continue on their quest and/or save Ogginnogg from both the Unh Aneghr and Dwergr threats.

Player Characters should have reached 15th level by the end of this chapter, after they receive all the appropriate story XP awards (see below); if they have not reached at least 15th level, the Games Master should try and encourage them to deal with both the Unh Aneghr and Dwergr menaces. Potential hooks for the Player Characters to continue exploring the dungeon include:

- Did the Player Characters help the gnomes? If they did not, the gnomes are *still* offering a reward...
- Were the Unh Aneghr stopped? Did they find Matron K'lbana?
- Did they discover the history of Taemorai/Webwind?
- Did they stop or even seek the Dwergr army?
- Did they ever find out Taemorai was behind the Dwergr Army?

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

The ending of the adventure depends on what the Player Characters did during the adventure:

- If the Player Characters eliminate Matron K'lbana, the Unh Aneghr clan enters a period of civil strife for a few months, after which the clan divides in

four factions, lead by each of the four members of the Task Force (see **L4** in page 78 of *The Path of Archanerath*). The ongoing strife keeps the Unh Aneghr occupied for many years, unless the Player Characters leave the Dwergr army alive, in which case the Dwergr eliminate the squabbling Unh Aneghr within the year.

- If the Player Characters defeated either the Unh Aneghr or the Dwergr but not both, the remaining force retains control of Ogginnogg and enslaves its people.
- If the Player Characters take care of both the Dwergr and the Unh Aneghr, the Ogginnogg gnomes take over both Dwergrard and the Drow Spire; after a few years, Ogginnogg extends all the way to both fortresses and slowly becomes a great metropolis where the Player Characters are always well received.

REWARDS

Both Dwergrard and the Drow Spire have a staggering amount of available loot; in addition, the Ogginnogg gnomes make good on their deal and reward the Player Characters with 10,000 gold pieces if they eliminate K'lbana, plus another 10,000 if they get rid of the Drow Guard at Ogginnogg. One of these two payments is made in the form of a tear-shaped sapphire worth 10,000 gold pieces; if the Player Characters keep this gem, it might become important later.

STORY EXPERIENCE AWARDS

The Player Characters earn 6,000 experience points if they eliminate Matron K'lbana Unh Aneghr, plus another 3,000 experience points if they eliminate or rout the Drow Guard at Ogginnogg. They earn 3,000 experience points if they discover the existence of Taemorai, plus 6,000 if they disable or disperse the Dwergr army. Also, the Player Characters receive 3,000 experience points for stirring up the Kanahraun against the Unh Aneghr and an extra 3,000 experience points if they take Taemorai and/or Webwind to each other's presence.

THE CURSE OF ARCHANEROTH

The Player Characters reach the deepest level of Mount Moru – the Lightless Depths. There, they must seek the lost entrance into Archaneroth, to find the Cursed City and face Aogarn at last...

Expected Character Level: It is recommended Player Characters have achieved at least 15th level. Lower-level characters should adventure a bit more around Mount Moru before entering the Lightless Depths (Area N).

Note: As this is the last chapter in the **Blood of Dragons** saga, there are no guidelines to play it as a separate adventure, as it mostly would not make sense to characters that have not played some of the other chapters.

Aogarn's Adventure

After abandoning his mother and her people to their deaths at the Resting Place, Aogarn continued downward, escorted only by the Dragon Guard he had created. He was, to all purposes, alone; alone with his thoughts, with his obsession, with himself – always with himself. At this point, Aogarn had become pretty much aware of his draconic blood and the fact his father was probably a half-dragon, although Aedhaine never spoke of it.

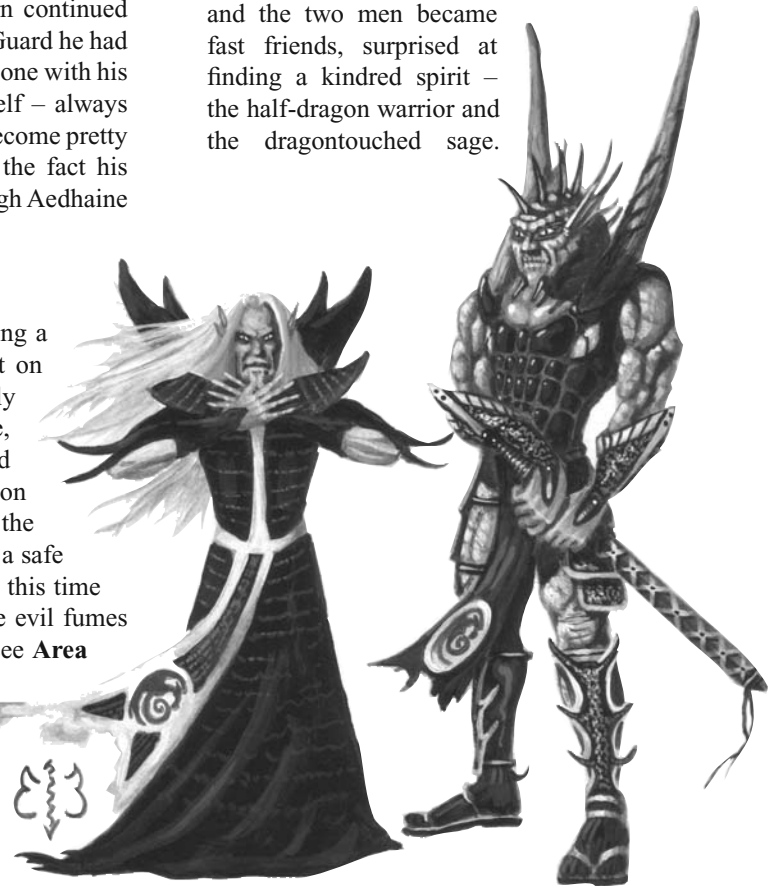
AOGARN'S PATH

Aogarn crossed the Giant Caves by paying a large tribute to King Maladrev; he went on through the Dark Warrens and actually spent a few days with Tawunn Tamestone, discussing the Cult of the Cave and witnessing the interviews with Aeathon the Mad. He lived for a few weeks in the lower levels of this area, trying to devise a safe way deeper into the Darkdelving; during this time he lost many of his Dragon Guard to the evil fumes of the area and to the Nightwing itself (see **Area K13**). Finally he gave up and took the tunnel complex leading from **K14** to areas **L** and **M**. He avoided the Unh Aneghr spire and Dwegard, yet he was a guest at the Kanahraun caves for another couple of weeks; thus he gained access to Webwind, with which he also spent many days, and to the Lower

Tunnels. From this complex of underground caverns and passages, Aogarn made his own way to **Area N**, where he fought off the Forgotten Ones and ignored or went through every danger, positively frantic now. Using advanced divination magic, he found the most direct route to the Lost Path at **Area N15**, slew the half-dragon hydra at **N10** and took his men to **N15**, where he forced the access open using the correct key – a tear-shaped black opal, which he had found during his initial exploration of the Athan ruins and always suspected had something to do with the dragon's Tears and the entrance to Archaneroth.

BLACKBLADE

During his stay in **Area L**, Aogarn made a few visits to Ogginnogg, where he got supplies and information from the deep gnomes. There, he found the mercenary Blackblade, a strong half-dragon warrior; he was there for some business with the Drow Guard of Ogginnogg, though they had not offered a price that satisfied him. Aogarn did offer such a price and the two men became fast friends, surprised at finding a kindred spirit – the half-dragon warrior and the dragontouched sage.



Blackblade and Aogarn remain side-by-side, with Blackblade being put in charge of the Dragon Guard and given the title of Aogarn's personal bodyguard.

Aogarn in Archaneroth

Finally, the young wizard gained access to the Damned City, being the first mortal human to explore it since the Gods cast it from the Mortal Plane. He spent weeks, even months, exploring every corner of the city, analysing its secrets and studying its buildings; during this time, he encountered and fought the many ghosts that lived in the city, destroying them all and turning Archaneroth in a real abandoned necropolis. Finally, last month, he found a way across the condemned wall at **O14** (he researched, wrote and used a *password* scroll) and entered the Temple of the Dragon Lord.

THE END OF THE JOURNEY

Finally, Aogarn has reached the goal he sought for his entire adult life – the Lost Temple of Archaneroth, where the Dragon Lord sleeps and waits. The wizard intends to replace the Dragon Lord, wrest his ancient power from him and assume his – he believes – rightful place as a dragon god himself. To do this, he must find an access into the Tomb of the Dragon Lord, which remains sealed forever by the God's Curse. To unseal the Tomb, he intends to break the Travelling Seal, which no mortal creature had ever attempted in the millennia it has been active. Aogarn has also found and dealt with the Dragon Lord's Three Slaves (see page 81), who have agreed or been bullied into letting him pass.

NOW

Aogarn has spent several days in front of the Travelling Seal (**Area O25**), weakening it and preparing the arcane rites needed to destroy it. When the Player Characters arrive, Aogarn is completely absorbed by this task; he will not come out of **Area O25** until he succeeds in destroying the Seal.

Chapter Sections

Chapter Seven starts as soon as the Player Characters begin exploring **Area N**, the deepest level of the Moru dungeon; from there, they must find the hidden entrance into Archaneroth at **N15** and, finally, enter the Damned City, where they must locate the Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord, find a way in and face the dangers of the oldest Athan tomb in existence, where they will probably find Aogarn at last and deal with the menace of the Dragon Lord once and for all.

Adventure sections include the following:

The Lightless Depths: The chapter begins with the Player Characters exploring the forgotten caverns of the Lightless Depths, where they may face the unnamed horrors of a time before time and face the primal terror to find the secret access into the City of Archaneroth.

The Damned City: This section has the Player Characters exploring the last ruins of what used to be the City of Archaneroth, where they may find the creatures, monsters and traps that survived through the curse and the intervening millennia.

Temple of the Dragon Lord: When the Player Characters find an access through the **O14** entrance, they may finally enter the Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord, where the final reckoning with Aogarn and the Dragon Lord awaits.

The Fortress of Hell: Optionally, during the exploration of the Temple of the Dragon Lord, the Player Characters may visit the fiendish fortress of Hellfast, connected to Archaneroth through a cursed gate; there, the Player Characters are likely to run into a great brewing battle between two hosts of fiends...

The Lightless Depths

These caves are the nadir of Mount Moru, the deepest level in the dungeon and one of the most ancient places in creation, older than the Gods, perhaps older than nature itself. The only creatures inhabiting it are dark, forgotten beings from a primal age of the world, that either belong to the timeless abysses or simply arrived there one day, having lost all light and hope and thus attracted to this devoid and dismal site.

While the Player Characters remain in the Lightless Depths, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area N: The Lightless Depths**, as detailed in page 98 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

The Player Characters' task here is to find the secret pass by which Aogarn entered Archaneroth and follow him into the cursed city, as they encounter and fight off the denizens of the dark tunnels.

RESTING

There are no safe places to rest or recover in the Lightless Depths; anywhere the player Characters rest, the chance remains for a random encounter with

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forgotten ones, as indicated in page 102 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE UNICORN HORN

If the Player Characters open the tomb of the Nightwalker at **Area N7**, they find a great treasure there, including the weapons with which the Nightwalker was vanquished; one of these weapons is actually the Unicorn's Horn, a great artefact of the forces of good. This is the relic the priests of Iri at the Last Shrine wanted when the Player Characters to find at the beginning of the adventure – this is what they were looking for when they organised the Moru expedition (see page 12).

THE PATH INTO ARCHANEROTH

The lost path into the Cursed City of Archaneroth is a secret passage, hidden from all view and from existence itself. The secret access into this passage is hidden at **N15** but it may not be entered by normal means, as it does not share the same dimensional space as the caves. *Teleport*, *plane shift* and similar spells are useless in this case, as the Travelling Seal (see page 64 of *The Path of Archaneroth*) blocks all kind of dimensional travel below Mount Moru. A *true seeing* spell reveals the passage, though it gives

no means of accessing it. The only magic that could open the path would be a carefully worded *limited wish*, *wish* and *miracle*.

Besides spells, there are two items that allow entrance to the **N15** passage. The first is the unicorn horn (see sidebar); any of the two forms of its *true light* effect reveal the hidden entrance and open a temporary path into the tunnel (lasting 1d6 minutes). The second item is a collection of strange, Tear-shaped gems and metal drops the Player Characters may have found during their travels. If a character passes near **Area N15** while carrying at least one of these gems, the Tear emits a strange coloured beam towards the secret entrance, somehow attracted by an unknown arcane power on the other side. As long as the Tear is held up in the direction of the Lost Path, the way remains open.

Once the passage has been opened, Player Characters may take it to access **Area O1**.

EXITING AREA N

The only way out of the Lightless Depths is the pit at **Area N1**, unless the Player Characters manage to open the **N15** exit towards Archaneroth (**Area O**).

ARTEFACT: THE UNICORN HORN

This blessed weapon is the bane of darkness and evil everywhere, representing the light of truth and the piercing might of knowledge. The Unicorn Horn looks like a spear, crafted from the true horn of a unicorn and given a shaft of sacred white wood. When the unicorn horn is wielded in combat, it works as a *+3 undead bane holy spear*; a worshipper of Iri of the Blessed Horn can command the unicorn horn to create a *true light* effect a number of times per day equal to his Wisdom modifier (minimum of 1). A *true light* effect can be activated in two forms (the wielder of the unicorn horn decides which form the beam will take):

Aura: In this mode, the *true light* effect works as a *daylight* spell in all respects, except it is much stronger: it has a radius of 120 feet and counts as natural daylight against undead and other creatures affected by it, plus it automatically dispels any kind of magical darkness it comes in contact with. Furthermore, the wielder of the unicorn horn is affected as per a *true seeing* spell at caster level 21.

Sunbeam: The wielder of the unicorn horn can also command the *true light* effect to focus into a single, 88 foot long beam of strong, blinding brightness. Any evil-aligned creature touched by the beam is affected as per a *sunbeam* spell at caster level 21; non-evil creatures are affected by the blinding effect but suffer no hit point damage from the beam. This beam does not deal any damage to plants, fungi or oozes.

In addition, both forms of the *true light* effect work as a *greater dispel magic* effect, at caster level 21, against any spell or magical effect with the evil descriptor.

Activating the unicorn horn's *true light* effect is a standard action that does not provoke a free attack.

Strong evocation (good); CL 21st; Weight 7 lb.

The Damned City

The City of Archaneroth was sealed off from the world many millennia ago, when the Athans offended the Gods and were cursed for that; now, it remains anchored to the deepest pits below the world, inevitably fastened to the very roof of Hell thanks to the Travelling Seal.

While the Player Characters remain in The Damned City, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Areas O1-O14: The Damned City**, as detailed in page 106 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

The Players must explore the city to find the hidden access into the Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord, buried forever beyond the wall at **Area O14**, so they may reach Aogarn before he opens the Travelling Seal and frees the Dragon Lord.

Note: At the point the Player Characters enter the City of Archaneroth, they have exactly 26 hours before Aogarn succeeds at opening the Seal. After 26 hours have elapsed, the Travelling Seal is broken, with the appropriate consequences (see page 82), regardless of where the Player Characters are at the moment.

EXPLORING THE DAMNED CITY

It bears noting that, while the unicorn horn and the Tears may help a Player Character *enter* the City, they do not allow him to *exit*. Once the Player Characters enter **Area O1**, it is not possible to go back; the passage behind them becomes closed and lost unless they have another means to return.

THE DRAGON GUARD

As soon as the Player Characters enter the city, they have a 50% chance of attracting one of the three Dragon Guard teams in the area (see **Area O2** in page 106 of *The Path of Archaneroth*); if they make a significant disturbance in the city, by fighting this guard team or in any other fashion, the other two Dragon Guard teams rush to join the fight. If the Player Characters give too much trouble (such as defeating all three Dragon Guard teams), Aogarn sends Blackblade (see page 122) and his elite men to deal with the disturbance. Blackblade has orders to kill without asking questions; Aogarn is too involved in his current task to allow any distraction at this point. Note that, in this case, Blackblade is carrying Aogarn's temple key (see the **Appendix** for the statistics and equipment of both Blackblade and Aogarn); that is, the crystal sphere required to open the temple door at **Area O15**.

BESTING

Most of the city's ruined edifices make good places for resting safely, especially if the Player Characters dealt with all three Dragon Guard teams already.

Ravahnasa Singh

The rakshasa at **Area O5** has watched everything that has happened in Archaneroth ever since he came to it through the Hellfast gate. The undead city has been boring but much better than the lower planes any day, so Ravahnasa has no complaint about living here. During his time in Archaneroth, Ravahnasa has gathered enough facts about the city, its history and its current state to put the wisest of scholars to shame. With the situation of Aogarn being about to boreal the Travelling Seal, Ravahnasa has been mostly focused on what he will do the moment he is free to roam the world again. He does not much care about what Aogarn or the Dragon Lord might do with the world after they fulfil their goals; however, he is wary just in case they notice him before he manages to escape. As a result of all this, it is unlikely Ravahnasa will pay much attention to the Player Characters, unless they stir things up too much in the city. If it becomes clear they plan to prevent the destruction of the Travelling Seal, he *does* become interested in stopping the Player Characters.

ENCOUNTERING RAVAHNASASINGH

If possible, Ravahnasa attempts to approach the Player Characters peacefully, without revealing he is a Rakshasa, trying to convince them to allow Aogarn to break the Seal. His favourite argument is that it will allow *everyone* to return to the mortal plane; his second favourite argument is that Aogarn and the Dragon Lord are quite likely to try and destroy each other, which is true as well.

Ravahnasa knows or has deduced the following facts, none of which he will share gladly:

- The whole story of Archaneroth and the Athan Empire, as related in page 16 of *The Dragon Stone*.
- In addition, Ravahnasa has deduced Amaros the Dragon Lord is none other than the Morudhain chief Luedhain, who managed to find Archaneroth and rule it, as he intended, changing his name and becoming the villain of his own legend.
- The invading wizard name is Aogarn and he intends to break the seal of the Dragon Lord's Tomb; once the tomb is open, he plans to replace the Dragon Lord and take his power for himself.

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- The Dragon Lord's guardians have decided to let Aogarn pass; this must mean it *is* in their best interest for the Travelling Seal to be broken, which means the Dragon Lord *wants* the Travelling Seal to be broken.
- The Dragon Lord died and ordered his tomb built a few days before the Curse befell and destroyed Archaneroth.
- If the Dragon Lord can still benefit from the breakage of the Travelling Seal, it means he can benefit from it, which must mean he is still alive (or undead) inside his Tomb. If the Dragon Lord is still alive after ordering himself buried 3,000 years ago, it must mean he planned this all along.
- The entrance courtyard with the standing stones is actually some kind of magical place, built for who knows what purpose – but for a purpose, that is for sure.
- Aogarn killed Chameri, the City Steward, though removing the stake from his undead heart might wake him up and get him to share some information.
- Those statues at the cathedral entrance are golems.
- The way inside the Lost Temple is in the wall beyond the standing stone; a simple *passwall* spell might be used to get across.
- The great door of the Temple may only be opened with a special key; most of the high-ranking Athan priests had one.
- A month ago, Archaneroth was swarming with the ghosts and mummies of its inhabitants; Aogarn came, destroyed all of these undead Athans and destroyed what keys to the temple he could find.
- There *is* a tomb in the haunted plaza to the northwest; so well hidden not even Aogarn found it. It does have a priest inside and one can bet he had one of those key-things to the Temple door...
- There is a portal to Hell in the Lost Temple. Beyond that portal lies the Hellfast fortress.
- Hellfast is controlled by two fiendish hosts, one made up of devils and another made up of demons, which battle each other for control of a darker secret.
- The demon statue to the northwest is not a statue but the petrified image of the demon that smote Archaneroth personally; his name was Abbazel and he commanded the host that invaded the city the day of the Gods' Curse.
- If the Travelling Seal is broken, Abbazel will probably wake up.
- The fortress of Hellfast has an access to the cave of the Wyrn-Worm, the original dragon of darkness; maybe the Wyrn-Worm is the 'Old Dragon' everybody is always talking about, eh?

- The sphinx at the entrance of the city lost a riddle contest against Aogarn and she is bitter as the lower planes for it. She might help them if they get on her good side.

Ravahnasa does not want the Player Characters to enter the Temple and stop Aogarn, so he tries to keep them entertained and distracted with idle banter; if they keep intent on finding the Temple he misleads them, suggesting the Temple access is actually somewhere else – the cathedral, some of the ruined buildings, anything to keep the Player Characters off the track... if that fails, he tries to convince them that breaking the Seal is actually a good idea. Ravahnasa's statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

ABBAZEL, THE MACE OF RUIN

Abbazel was the nalfeshnee general that led the demon forces when the Gods and the Dark Forces joined to curse Archaneroth. It was Abbazel's task to physically destroy the city with his army of demons; after the curse took effect, the destruction of the city killed Abbazel as well, his material body bound to a stone pillar for eternity, so as to watch over the City he destroyed. If the Travelling Seal is broken, Abbazel breaks out of his prison and initiates a mad rampage of destruction, bent on wrecking the city ruins all over again. Abbazel's full statistics may be found in the **Appendix**.

CHAMERI, THE CITY STEWARD

Many millennia ago, Chameri was an Athan noble, who kept an ugly secret – he had the blood of a demon in his veins, as his mother had mated with a fiend of the Lower Planes. He managed to hide his condition with illusion magic, though he was forced to appear in public as little as possible. When the Curse arrived to Archaneroth, Chameri was spared the destruction thanks to the very fiendish blood for which he had been spurned in life; the Dark Powers gave him undead life and appointed him the steward of the dead city. At that point, Chameri's loyalties switched forever; currently he is very serious about observing Archaneroth's proper punishment and protecting the Travelling Seal. Then Aogarn came, staked Chameri through the heart and left him nailed to the floor of the Archaneroth Cathedral (**Area O9**).

Encountering Chameri

To actually encounter Chameri, it is necessary that the Player Characters remove the stake from his heart; if they do so, Chameri wakes up, quite thankful and worried, warning them about Aogarn's plans and urging them to do something about it immediately.

THE CURSE OF ARCHANEROTH

If they agree to help Chameri protect the Travelling seal, he accompanies them to ensure their success. Chameri's statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

EXITING THE DAMNED CITY

There are two exits from the Damned City; the condemned passage from **O14** to **O15** (the Lost Temple Entrance) and the portal at **O13**, which only works if the Travelling Seal is broken.

The Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord

This is where the Athans buried their last kings in the sunset years of their empire, before the Curse that came to wipe their culture out. This is also where the Dragon Lord ordered himself buried just a few days the fall of Archaneroth; this is where he still waits now his own curse is nearing completion and the Travelling Seal is about to be broken. This is also where Aogarn waits, attempting to break the seal on his own; this is where the final battle against both of them shall take place.

While the Player Characters remain in the Lost Temple, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Areas O15-O27: Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord**, as detailed in page 114 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

The Player Characters must reach Aogarn and defeat him; if he succeeds in breaking the Travelling Seal, they must also stop the Dragon Lord and the demon host that is surely coming from Hellfast after that.

EXPLORING THE LOST TEMPLE OF THE DRAGON LORD

If the Player Characters have already caught Aogarn's attention by dispatching his Dragon Guard earlier in the Damned City, he is alert when they enter **Area O15**; if the Player Characters get past the Three slaves at areas **O16**, **O17** and **O18**, he sends his Dragon Guards at **O24** to stop them, asking Blackblade and his men to stay back and protect him (if they are still alive). If this fails, Aogarn sends in Blackblade (if he is still alive), counting on finishing the ritual by himself.

RESTING

Most tombs in the Lost Temple of the Dragon Lord are empty and offer safe resting conditions once the

monsters or traps have been cleared; this, however, may be a short-lived peace if the Dragon Lord awakes.

THE THREE SLAVES

The Dragon Lord had three slaves, bound to him by friendship, love and black magic enslaving their souls. They were Jeldanara, his lover, Aspim his bodyguard and N'to'och, his personal aide. When he cast the curse that turned him into a lich, they in turn became vampires. The Three Slaves sleep at three special coffins located at **O16**, **O17** and **O18**. Currently, each of the Three Slaves waits in his chambers for the Travelling Seal to be broken, so they may open their master's Tomb. This is the only reason why they allowed Aogarn to pass and the only thought in their undead minds right now.

Encountering the Three Slaves

Although openly hostile to Player Characters, the Three Slaves do not attack unless provoked first – or if the player Characters have Chameri with them. They try to be diplomatic first, attempting to convince the Player Characters of allowing Aogarn to break the seal or even *dominate* them into it; if they fail to solve it with charm, they resort to combat.

The statistics of each of the Three Slaves are detailed in the **Appendix**. Each of the Slaves carries a single piece of parchment with a word on it; when joined, these three parchments form a mighty and arcane phrase that constitutes the Dragon Lord's phylactery and the key to his tomb (see below).

THE TRAVELLING SEAL

The room containing the Travelling Seal (**O25**) is where everything is happening right now, where the fate of Mount Moru and the Morudhain Lands hangs in the balance and where they shall confront Aogarn to decide that fate.

If the Player Characters arrive to **Area O25** within 26 hours of having entered Archaneroth, they find Aogarn still casting the complex spell that will allow him to break the seal.

AOGARN

Aogarn is here. It is up to them to fight him, stop him or help him; he brooks no interruption and reacts violently if forced to stop his ritual. If Blackblade has not been dealt with yet, he is here with his men, protecting Aogarn from any interruption. If

Blackblade is here to defend him, Aogarn does not take part in the fight, focusing all his attention on the spell. The statistics of Aogarn, Blackblade and Blackblade's men can be found in the **Appendix**. If Aogarn is alone, he may be talked to but he will not answer; he furiously attacks if bothered or interrupted. If the Travelling Seal is damaged at any time during the battle, even for 1 point of damage, it is considered broken as Aogarn weakened it enough.

BREAKING THE TRAVELLING SEAL

If the Player Characters arrive to **O25** more than 26 hours after their arrival to Archaneroth, the Travelling Seal is broken and Aogarn is dead at the base of the stone, killed by the backlash of dark energy, his dreams murdered by their own goal.

If Aogarn's ritual is stopped, Ravahnasa Singh and/or Blackblade (if they are still alive) run to the seal, intent on breaking it themselves by any means necessary. A single hit point of damage will be enough as Aogarn has *extremely* weakened the seal. If all else fails, alternate methods of breaking the seal include a *wish* or *miracle* spell; or even a *limited wish*, with the seal in its weakened state.

If the Travelling Seal is broken by any means, at any moment, it has the following consequences:

- First and foremost, Archaneroth is brought back to the mortal world and the passage from **N15** to **O1** becomes visible and usable by any creature.
- Second, the wards on the Dragon Lord's tomb are dispelled and it becomes possible to open the door using the three words of his phylactery to open the tomb.
- Third, whoever broke the seal must make a Fortitude save against massive damage or die, the magic backlash hurting him with all the energy of the broken seal. If the save succeeds, the creature is unharmed.
- The Darkdelving (**K13**) is connected to the Wyrmworm's cave at **P15**.
- Abbazel the Mace of Ruin (**Area O7**) awakens and begins destroying everything again.
- The portal to the surface at **O13** activates and may be used normally from now on.
- If Ravahnasa Singh (**Area O5**) and/or the night hag Achrida (**N2**) are still alive, they flee Mount Moru, never to return.
- The battle at Hellfast (see page 83) begins...

The Tomb of the Dragon Lord

The Dragon Lord waits for his awakening, sleeping in his tomb at **Area O26** until the Travelling Seal has been destroyed.

OPENING THE TOMB

The entrance to the Dragon Lord's Tomb (**Area O26**) is protected by such a collection of wards and spells that it becomes nearly impossible to open it; the quickest and easiest method is to read the three words of the Dragon Lord's phylactery, which break the Tomb's seals; however, this tactic is of no use if the Travelling Seal has not been broken.

If anybody breaks the Travelling Seal at any time, the Three Slaves (**O16**, **O17**, **O18**) know it immediately and they rush to free their lord by speaking the words of his phylactery. If they succeed, the gate opens and the Dragon Lord is free again, to walk the mortal world and wreak his vengeance upon it...

REVENGE OF THE DRAGON LORD

If awakened, the Dragon Lord's first step is to destroy the barrier blocking **Areas O14** and **O15**; then, he goes out to the Damned City and slay Abbazel the mace of ruin, this time permanently. Afterwards he returns to the Temple, seeking Aogarn and the remaining intruders. This is where the Player Characters come in. The Dragon Lord's full statistics can be found in the **Appendix**.

EXITING THE LOST TEMPLE OF THE DRAGON LORD

The exits from the Lost Temple are **Area O15** (leading back to the Damned City) and **Area O27** (leading down to **Area P1** in Hellfast).

Hellfast

The extraplanar fortress of Hellfast was created by an alliance of Gods and fiends, as a means of watching the eternal punishment of Archaneroth and preventing the city from escaping back to the Prime Material. The fortress was populated with a host of devils and another of demons, stationed to watch over the Damned City and prevent the escape of the punished Athans. However, when Aogarn came and destroyed all the undead of Archaneroth, the fiends' task stopped having any meaning; now, they are only waiting for Aogarn or someone to break the Travelling Seal. As soon as that happens, the fiends shall organise a war, the winner of which will keep control of the fortress with all its convenient accesses into the Prime Material...

THE CURSE OF ARCHANEROTH

While the Player Characters remain in Hellfast, use the area descriptions and encounters from **Area P: Hellfast**, as detailed in page 120 of *The Path of Archaneroth*.

THE MISSION

If the Travelling Seal has been broken, the Player Characters' mission is to stop the fiends from conducting their war and invading the Mortal Plane; if the Travelling Seal remains intact, the Player Characters may simply wish to destroy the fiends' fortress, or else find the Wyrms-Worm, that alleged avatar of the Dragon Lord.

BESTING

There are no safe places to rest in Hellfast; anywhere the Player Characters lie down and rest, the chance for a random encounter remains. The sole exception to this is **The Soul Cave** (see below).

THE FIEND FIGHT

The hosts of Hellfast are commanded by two great fiends: Mrahasaelech the Demon Master, and Lord Baalbele the Thirteenth Circle. They have mutually agreed to betray the gods and attempt to take the Hellfast portals into the mortal world as soon as the Travelling Seal has been broken. At that moment, both generals will give each other a few days to muster their forces, after which they shall clash as Hellfast has never seen before. The winner gets control of the fortress and *both* of the portals leading out of it.

THE HELLFAST GATES

When the Travelling Seal is broken, there will be two gates, not one, leading out of the Hellfast fortress: First, the Endless Spiral at **P1**, which leads to Archaneroth and from it to the base of Mount Moru; second, the Hellgate at **P14**, leading to the Wyrms-Worm's cave at **P15** and from there to the Darkdelving at **K13**, from which the winning fiend army plans to pour like a torrent of sin and devastation. This is what is brewing in Hellfast; this is what the Player Characters must stop.

MURATHOS THE TARNISHED BRONZE

In life, Murathos was a brave, lively dragon, inquisitive but wise. He set up a cave somewhere near the Moru peak and settled there with his hoard; however, he had the misfortune of finding a mercenary devil that had escaped a summoning spell from a travelling mage and was using Mount Moru as a means to return to Hell. When he found the dragon's hoard, the devil stole it to the last coin; furious, Murathos gave chase

to the demon and they both ended in Hell. There, the demon's companions ensnared Murathos, captured him and submitted his body and soul to unimaginable torture. In the end, Murathos' original self had been twisted and corrupted to the point he was not a dragon any more; he had become a fiend just like his tormentors. Now, Murathos guards the Endless Spiral (**P1**) against any intruder in the name of his new masters...

THE SOUL CAVE

This sacred place (**Area P9**) is a pocket plane of goodness and respite, where the souls of those doomed to Hell unjustly go to their final rest after their sentence is carried out. According to Moru legends, every time a soul goes to Hell without deserving it, a pendant appears in his neck – the mark of innocence and the right to deliverance. By using this pendant, the wearer may go to the Soul Cave, where he shall rest forever in relieving bliss and forget the pain and torture he went through.

At the Soul cave, characters may freely speak to other dead spirits as if by casting a *speak with dead* spell of indefinite duration. Furthermore, characters may rest normally at the Soul Cave without being bothered by fear, hunger or fatigue, not even by the moans of the doomed souls inhabiting the place. Time spent in the Soul Cave does not count in the material world; a character might spend years in the Soul Cave and then return to the Mortal Plane at the exact same moment he left.

Dead souls cannot return from the Soul cave; once there, they rest forever. Only a living creature may go to the Soul Cave and return; however, once a creature has visited the Soul Cave, he may only return when he dies; the pendant for the Soul Cave does not work for any single character more than once, not even if a *wish* or *miracle* is used to do so.

In Hellfast, only one creature is innocent enough to carry a Soul Cave pendant: Murathos, the Tarnished Bronze (**P1**).

THE WYRM-WORM

The creature of absolute darkness, death and evil in **P15** is the very spawn of the Old Dragon; a creature of concentrated evil and rotting spirit matter. Gradually spawned through the centuries by the Old Dragon's presence and hatred, the Wyrms-Worm has grown immense, bloated and unfathomably evil; the Nightwalker (**N7**) and the Nightwing (**K13**) are the Wyrms-Worm's spawn.

THE CURSE OF ARCHANEROTH

EXITING AREA P

There is no exit from Hellfast except for the Hellgate (P13), which leads to a worse place than the fortress, and the Endless Spiral (P1), which requires a complex and dangerous ritual to activate.

DESTROYING AREA P

Unknown to the Hellfast demons, the Wyrm-Worm is the force the Gods used to build their fortress; if the Wyrm-Worm is slain, Hellfast crumbles after 1d6 hours, leaving nothing but extraplanar rubble. When this happens, any creature that is not native to Hell (such as the Player Characters for example) is automatically whisked away from the crumbling fortress, appearing again at the Hellfast gate in O27, now (and from now on) non-functional.

Ending the Chapter

Chapter Seven (and **The Blood of Dragons**) ends when the Player Characters have dealt with the Dragon Lord and Aogarn, either by defeating them or by stopping the Travelling Seal from being broken. The Hellfast section is meant as an epilogue and has almost no narrative bearing in the main storyline, except for the encounter with the Wyrm-Worm and what he represents – the fact the Dragon Lord does exist.

Player Characters should have reached at least 19th level by the end of this chapter, after they receive all the appropriate story XP awards (see below); if they have not reached at least 19th level, the Games Master should try and encourage them to deal with any loose ends that might be still left:

- Did the Player Characters break the Travelling Seal? They may want to break it to gain access to the Dragon Lord and thus ensure they destroy it forever.
- Did the Player Characters enter Hellfast? Did they stop the Fiend war?
- Furthermore, is Hellfast still standing? If the Player Characters did not slay the Wyrm-Worm, thus destroying Hellfast, it is quite likely the devils will find the portals again and use them sooner or later...
- Did the Player Characters explore the whole of Archaneroth, or were they too pressed with trying to stop Aogarn in time?
- And most importantly... did the Player Characters find 10 Tear-shaped jewels? Do they know the purpose of the sacred place at O1? Could they be ready for the bonus adventure...?

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

The Player Characters may wish to return to civilisation now, so as to report the results of their mission:

- If the Player Characters had accepted The Last Shrine's mission to find the Unicorn Horn, they may return it and receive the agreed-upon reward (up to 20,000 gold pieces); however, if they did not close or destroy the Hellfast gates, the clerics of Iri urge them to return, even offering them an additional reward if necessary – after all, it does not do to have an open gate to hell below one's country.
- If the Player Characters report the discovery of Archaneroth and the Travelling Seal, they become world-famous, even legendary explorers the land over; from now on, they are seen as an authority in dungeon romping, with sages and adventurers everywhere coming to them for advice on underground exploration.
- However, a nagging doubt remains... what were these Tear-shaped jewels for? After all, it was a bit of a disappointment the Dragon Lord was actually nothing more than a man...

REWARDS

Besides the treasure trove to be found in Archaneroth (particularly the Dragon Lord's Tomb), the Meadowvale Township gives the Player Characters the honorary title of Meadowvale's favourite sons if they bring proof of having found Archaneroth and the Dragon Lord; they also give them permanent lodging and discounts when they visit, besides building maybe a statue or two depending on how the Player Characters manage their own hype.

STORY EXPERIENCE AWARDS

The Player Characters earn 8,000 experience points if they save the Travelling Seal or 4,000 if they actively discover how to break it (yes, they gain experience in both cases); also, grant them 6,000 experience points if they discover how to activate the Endless Spiral. Furthermore, they earn 8,000 additional experience points if they manage to enter the Dragon Lord's Tomb. They also gain 6,000 experience points if they stop the war in Hellfast and prevent the fiends from washing over the Mortal Plane, plus another 6,000 if they destroyed the Wyrm-Worm (and thus the whole of Hellfast). Finally, they gain 9,000 gold pieces if they return the Unicorn Horn to the Last Shrine.

THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

What is the true name of the Dragon God?

Temple of the Wyrm is a hidden adventure, accessible only through a series of riddles and secret keys hidden throughout *Ruins of the Dragon Lord*. It is a scenario for a medieval fantasy roleplaying game, intended for four characters of 18th to 19th level. Characters that successfully finish this adventure should amass enough experience points to reach 20th level – or perhaps even an epic level.

Before Running This Adventure

This adventure is only accessible to Player Characters that have gathered the Ten Tears of the dragon, hidden throughout the entire Moru dungeon, and then successfully solve the **Riddle of the Ten Tears** (see below). If the Player Characters have not fulfilled these prerequisites, they will not be able to activate the portal that leads to the last dungeon areas and to this adventure. This is so the final battle with the Dragon Lord himself is a prize as much as a challenge; a reward for constant and resourceful Player Characters, a treat as well as an ordeal. Therefore, the Games Master is encouraged to ensure his Player Characters have at least gathered the Ten Tears and the clues for the riddle before attempting to run this adventure.

Of course, the Games Master can scrap the riddle and simply allow his Player Characters to enter the portal to **Area W1** as soon as they reach 18th or 19th level; then again, he might consider it a challenge and let his players see if they can find the secret access to the epilogue of the adventure, the hardest level in the entire dungeon and the final battle against the Dragon God...

The Old Dragon

When the Old Dragon slew Gamageth, he slew eternity... he created death. He was doomed then, for he had created a world where death was possible; he, himself, could now die. He went to Mount Moru to wait for death; the time for his reckoning draws near...

Contrary to what most Moru locals believe the Old Dragon still sleeps in the depths of Mount Moru. He went to the deepest caves below the earth and the gods created Mount Moru above his eternal sleep, so he would never rise again until his time arrived. Thus death was buried below the Mountain, for that what Mount Moru truly is – the gravestone for death.

The Tears

As the Old Dragon walked into the deep caves, he cried for what he had done and for knowing he would have to die. He shed exactly ten tears, which fell scattered far and wide along the dark tunnels below the world. After these ten tears he shed for himself, the dragon never cried again; he then became blind, for tears were the only light of his eyes. A blind creature lost in darkness, with no more tears to cry for all eternity, the old Dragon lay down in the deepest depths of the world, never to be found again. However, his tears were left behind him, as a trail to mark his passage...

THE PATH

The legends say each of the tears became a dragon and that each dragon was the colour of the sky at the moment the tear had fallen. Thus there was a tear and a dragon for each of the hours of the day and the ten species of lesser dragons were born; however, the Old Dragon did not cry at either mid-day or midnight, so there was no dragon for either of these hours.

THE LIGHT OF TEN TEARS

The 'Ten Tears' the Old Dragon shed for himself are actually a mighty artefact, with the ability to indicate the way towards the Old Dragon. Each of the Ten Tears is a tear-shaped gem or metal drop, hidden at a specific location somewhere in the Moru Dungeon. When exposed to the open sky at a certain hour of the day, each of the stones emits a special beam of coloured light. If all of these beams were to cross each other, the combined light of the various hours of the day (an impossible event according to natural laws) would open a gate to the cave where the Old Dragon sleeps.

THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

THE SOLUTION

Many millennia ago, at the dawn of the Athan race, the Athans discovered that the Old Dragon still slept below Mount Moru; they also discovered anyone that would solve the conundrum of the Dragon's Tears would be able to find the Old Dragon's sleeping place. The Athans then set to meditating about the Ten Tears, the hours of day and their related significance; finally they devised a solution – they built a magical place, enchanted in such a way it would capture the light of each hour of the day and allow the Ten Tears to function all at the same time. To give instructions about activating this special place, they created a special language – a magical alphabet made of such permutations of words and letters that it would be sensitive to the light of the Ten Tears' beams; therefore, when the written alphabet was exposed to the beam of one of the Ten Tears, the letters would arrange themselves into secret words that only the initiated would understand, words that told how to use the sacred place the Athans had created. Finally, they wrote a poem, a long rhymed clue that would reveal the most important secret about the Tears and the hour of day corresponding to each one.

- The sacred place was the ArchanerOTH entrance, located in dungeon area **O1** (see page 106 of *The Path of ArchanerOTH*).
- The magical alphabet was the Athan's Secret Tongue (see page 52 of *The Dragon Stone*).
- The rhymed clue is the dragon Stone poem (see page 46 of *The Dragon Stone*).
- The secret instructions to use the sacred place are indicated in **Riddle of the Ten Tears**, below.

Riddle of the Ten Tears

The following are the instructions to solve the Riddle of the Ten Tears; the secret process to allow the Old Dragon's Tears to shine all at the same time and open the gate to where the Nameless WyrM sleeps. Only Player Characters that solve this riddle will be able to enter the last dungeon areas of Mount Moru and therefore play this adventure.

THE SOLUTION, STEP-BY-STEP

- The Ten Tears hidden throughout Mount Moru must all be located, gathered and taken to the eight standing stones at **Area O1**.
- Each of the Ten Tears must be located in the 'tear' under the eye of the dragon bas-reliefs carved on each of the standing stones. The following list

indicates which Tear must be affixed to which dragon, according to the hour of day the dragon represents in the standing stones:

Predawn – Emerald Tear
Dawn – Copper Tear
Morning – Diamond Tear
Afternoon – Sapphire Tear
Evening – Bronze Tear
Stars – Brass Tear
Moon – Silver Tear
Deep Night – Opal Tear

- The Ruby Tear must be located on the 'tear' under the eye of the dragon on the floor.
- As soon as all these nine tears are in place, they emit their beams simultaneously; these beams join in a single great ray of light at the centre of the standing stone circle.
- The last Tear (the gold tear) must be touched to this single beam of light at the centre.
- The words 'Atha Ah Moru' ('The Terror of Atha' in ancient Athan) must be said aloud.
- As soon as the light of the first nine Tears is centred on the gold Tear and the words 'Atha Ah Moru' are said aloud, the portal opens and every living creature inside **Area O1** is immediately transported to **Area W1** in the WyrM Caves.

THE CLUES

The following are the clues to solve the Riddle, exactly as the Player Characters shall receive them. Only Player Characters that correctly interpret these clues shall understand the riddle's solution.

- The Tears are magical but do not radiate magic when subject to any form of magical or mundane detection.
- Each Tear emits a bright beam of coloured light when exposed to the open sky at a specific hour. The hours at which each stone shines are indicated below:

Emerald Tear – 3 to 4 AM
Copper Tear – 5 to 6 AM
Diamond Tear – 7 to 8 AM
Gold Tear – 9 to 10 AM
Sapphire Tear – 2 to 3 PM
Ruby Tear – 4 to 5 PM
Bronze Tear – 6 to 7 PM
Brass Tear – 8 to 9 PM
Silver Tear – 10 to 11 PM
Opal Tear – 12 to 1 PM

- If any text written in the Athan Secret Tongue (see page 53 in *The Dragon Stone*) receives the light beam of one of the Tears, the letters magically rearrange themselves and transform into a clear message. The message appearing depends on the specific Tear used to illuminate the text, as indicated below:

Emerald Tear - 'After Finding The Ten Tears He Shed For Himself'

Copper Tear - 'The Ten Letters Of His Name Must Be Found'

Diamond Tear - 'Hidden In The First Of The First Ten Words'

Gold Tear - 'As Ordered According To The Dragons Of The Day!'

Sapphire Tear - 'After That You Must Go Where Nine Dragons Sleep'

Ruby Tear - 'His Eye Shall Shed The First Of The Tears!'

Bronze Tear - 'More Tears For The Eight Dragons Sleeping On Stone'

Brass Tear - 'On The Forbidden Hour You Shall Stand Amidst Them'

Silver Tear - 'Read The Secret Name You Have Learned To Say'

Opal Tear - 'Use The Last Tear Only To See The Light!'

Entering the Adventure

The only way to enter this adventure is to gather the Ten Tears of the Dragon and solve the Riddle to activate the portal at **O1**. If the portal is activated successfully, Player Characters are transported to the final two dungeon areas, which are not even described in *Path of Archaneroth*; these areas are the Wyrms Caves (**Area W**) and Temple of the Nameless Wyrms (**Area X**), beyond which is the cave of the Old Dragon. As soon as the riddle is solved (see **Riddle of the Ten Tears** above) and the gate correctly activated, proceed to **Area W: The Wyrms Caves**.

Area W: The Wyrms Caves

As you enter these dark, impossibly tall caves, you feel like you have stepped onto a new realm – not another plane but another place, perhaps another time...

Thousands of years ago, when the Morudhain Lands were created and dragons lived alongside mortals among the Primal Pits of the Beginning, the Old Dragon of the Morudhain came to sleep here, in the deepest recesses of the world, and in these caves he buried himself for all time. The only trace left of the Dragon's passing was a verse, written by unknown hands on a standing stone in the wasteland. Only those that understand the verse shall follow the dragon to his dark sleep.

For countless centuries, these mammoth caverns have been hidden beyond the reach of mortal knowledge; the only way to reach them is through the secret access opened only by the ten Tears of the Dragon and the secret magical process (see **Riddle of the Ten Tears** above). The Wyrms Caves are the antechamber (and only access) to the dreaded Temple of the Wyrms (**Area X**).

W1: Entrance

This immense grotto is the entrance to the Wyrms Caves. To the south it leads back through the secret portal to the Archaneroth Entrance (**Area O1**, see **Riddle of the Ten Tears** on page 86). To the north, east and west it leads to other cave areas (**W6**, **W3** and **W2** respectively).

Creatures (EL 19)

As soon as the Player Characters attempt to advance into the caves (taking any direction other than south), they must face the guardian of this passage – an aberrant creature created by the dark magic of this place, composed of the living energy of dragons' breath weapons. This energy abomination rushes any intruder furiously and then keeps attacking until it or all living creatures in the vicinity have been destroyed.

Dragon Storm: hp 522; see page 59 of *The Dragon Stone*.

THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

W2: The Dragon of the Depths

As you walk down the last step of the long staircase, you reach a vast underground lake. It is no more than 70 feet wide, yet you somehow feel you are not before a normal body of water – this is an ocean, a dark sea of the depths, connected to the very waters at the deepest bottom of creation. And something (everything?) lives here...

This cave lies at the bottom of a 100-foot deep, 100-foot long natural staircase. The cave floor connects to a deep underground sea, which is truly bottomless; characters swimming into it shall never reach the bottom, as it connects with both the Elemental Plane of Water and the Plane of Shadow. Attempting to explore these depths could even be the basis for a (fully underwater) side adventure.

THE UNDERGROUND SEA CAVE

The entire cave counts as aquatic terrain, requiring characters moving through it to make successful Swim checks (DC 10). Characters below the water are subject to drowning risks, as described in Chapter Eight of the *DMG*. The water in this cave is so preternaturally dark it allows no visibility whatsoever, unless magical means of illumination are used.

While in this cave, non-aquatic creatures suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls while underwater, plus they become off-balance unless they succeed on a Swim check (DC 10) each round. Off-balance creatures lose any Dexterity bonuses to their Armour Class and all attacks made against them receive a +2 bonus on the attack roll. Slashing or bludgeoning attacks made underwater do only half damage, with the exception of grappling damage, which is unaffected. Magic attacks deal normal damage, unless they are fire-based, in which case the caster must succeed at a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + spell level) or the effect automatically fails. Nonmagical fire is of course ineffective underwater. Creatures inside the water have improved cover (+8 bonus to Armour Class, +4 bonus on Reflex saves) against attacks made from the surface.

Creatures (EL 21)

When the Nameless Wyrms came to inhabit these caves, many primal, atavistic creatures from the darkest recesses of time were already living here, shunning the surface world and the passage of time. Very few of those great immortal monsters survived the coming of the Old Dragon; this cave is home to one of those few, a terrifying creature from the depths – a half-dragon leviathan from the forgotten abysses of the cosmos.

The Dragon of the Depths (advanced half-dragon cachalot whale): CR 21; Colossal dragon; HD

THE WYRM CAVES AS A DUNGEON

The Wyrms Caves are pure unworked stone belonging to the most primal depths of the world, older and deeper than Hell itself. The walls have hardness 10, Break DC 70 and 1,000 hit points per 10 foot by 10 foot section. The caves have no natural illumination at all.

Random Encounters in the Wyrms Caves

Every hour a group of characters spends exploring **Area W**, or if they take any action that would attract attention such as making a loud noise, there is a 10% chance of encountering a hostile creature, randomly determined or chosen from the following table:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR AREA W

D%	Encounter ¹
01-12	1+ white dragons
13-24	1+ black dragons
25-36	1+ brass dragons
37-48	1+ green dragons
49-60	1+ copper dragons
61-68	1+ blue dragons
69-76	1+ bronze dragons
77-84	1+ red dragons
85-92	1+ silver dragons
93-00	1+ gold dragons

¹Roll 1d100 for age and number of dragons: 01-25 = 1d3 Juvenile; 36-75 = 1 Mature Adult; 76-00 = 2 Adult + 1d2 Young

THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

36d10+363; hp 561; Init +5; Swim 40 ft.; AC 21, touch 3, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +27; Grp +63; Atk +39 melee (6d6+20, bite) or +39 melee (4d6+20, claw); Full Atk +39 melee (6d6+20, bite) and +37 melee (4d6+10, 2 claws) and +37 melee (2d6+10, tail slap); Space/reach 40 ft./20 ft.; SA breath weapon; SQ blindsight 120 ft., darkvision 60 ft., hold breath, immunity to cold, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision; AL NE; SV Fort +30, Ref +21, Will +14; Str 51, Dex 13, Con 30, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +47 (+43 if blindsight negated), Spot +43 (+43 if blindsight negated), Swim +67; Ability Focus (breath weapon), Alertness, Awesome Blow, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Improved Natural Attack (tail slap), Multiattack, Power Attack, Toughness.

Breath Weapon: 30-foot line of cold, 6d8 damage, Reflex save (DC 40) halves.

Blindsight (Ex): The Dragon of the Depths can ‘see’ by emitting high-frequency sounds, which enable it to locate creatures and objects up to 120 feet. A *silence* spell can negate this ability and force the creature to rely on its darkvision.

Hold Breath (Ex): The Dragon of the Depths may hold its breath for 240 rounds (almost half an hour) before it needs to surface.

W3: The Dragon of the Ayres

As you climb up the last step of this long staircase, you arrive to a great cave, the roof of which does not seem to be visible. Up there, the darkness is so deep you cannot even fathom the walls going up all the way to the gods know where. However, some echo, some strange kind of movement, seems to indicate something does live up there...

This cave lies atop a 100 foot high, 100 foot long ascending staircase. The cave does not have a ceiling; in fact, it goes up all the way to the Elemental Planes in an ascent that virtually never ends, connecting to both the Plane of Air and the Plane of Shadow.



Creatures (EL 20)

When the Nameless Wyrm came to inhabit these caves, many primal, atavistic creatures from the darkest recesses of time were already living here, shunning the surface world and the passage of time. Very few of those great immortal monsters survived the coming of the Old Dragon; this cave is home to one of those few, a terrifying creature of the air – a half-dragon gigantic bird from the eternal night of the cosmos.

The Dragon of the Ayres (advanced half-dragon roc): CR 20; Colossal dragon; HD 36d10+363; hp 561; Init +6; Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft.; AC 22, touch 4, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +27; Grp +63; Atk +39 melee (4d6+20, talon) or +39 melee (4d6+20, bite); Full Atk +39 melee (4d6+20, 2 talons) and +37 melee (4d6+10, bite); Space/reach 40 ft./20 ft.; SA breath weapon; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision; AL NE; SV Fort +30, Ref +22, Will +15; Str 50, Dex 15, Con 30, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +28, Listen +40, Move Silently +10, Spot +40; Ability Focus (breath weapon), Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (talon), Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Hide), Snatch, Stealthy, Toughness, Wingover.

Breath Weapon: 30 foot cone of dark fire, 6d8 damage, Reflex save (DC 40) halves.

W4: The Ghost of the Tarnished Bronze

You enter a dark, relatively narrow section of the caves. As your eyes adjust to the darkness, you think you glimpse a massive, glowing shape approaching you from the shadow...

This is a haunted cave within the Wyrms Caves; a place of death and unnatural power, where the souls of dead dragons come to fade away. The ground whispers with the supernatural words of dragon ghosts and their dark souls permeate the walls...

If a *Speak with Dead* or *Contact Other Plane* spell is cast inside this cave, the spell is answered by the soul of a dragon, with the corresponding consequences – dragons are witty, resourceful and not known for their graceful acceptance of death.

Creatures (EL 18)

If the Player Characters have already slain Murathos the Tarnished Bronze – the tormented dragon guarding the Hellfast entrance (**Area P1**) – his ghost appears here, cleansed of the half-fiend's taint and thankful for his release. It will approach the Player Characters peacefully and helpfully, wishing to warn them of the dangers ahead. The Games Master may use Murathos to warn the Player Characters about the Nameless Wyrms and its powers but also filling them in to any adventure clues they might have missed. He may also tell them how to activate the Dragon Seal at **W9**. If the Player Characters attack Murathos, he does not retaliate; he simply dissipates back into nothingness with a sigh.

Treasure

If the Player Characters stay to heed Murathos' advice, he gives them a part of himself – a suit of *+1 dragonhide plate of etherealness* – before leaving to oblivion forever.

W5: The Hall of Draav Vulkaar

This cave, generally smaller than the rest, steadily descends into a dark, wide area, illuminated by a strange red glow; it resembles the flush of open flame – or gold...

This cave is actually a tunnel leading to a lower section, a great cave below the main area. The lower cave is a natural circle more than 100 feet in diameter and twice as tall, paved with gold, jewellery and other items – the treasure of a dragon.

Creatures (EL 20)

Said dragon, of course, still lives here. This is Draav Vulkaar, last in a long dynasty of dragons, all of which have served as caretakers and butlers of the Wyrms Caves throughout the millennia. Those dragons chosen for the great duty of serving the Nameless Wyrms have always undertaken their duties with pride and deepest commitment, though Draav Vulkaar thinks otherwise. He hates these dark caves and the feeling of tending a dead god – he yearns for the thrills, treasure and power of the outside world. Of course, that will not stop him from fulfilling his guarding duties, which allow him to take out his frustration on any living thing that enters his cave...

In the very remote case the Player Characters can get Draav Vulkaar to talk instead of attack, he is likely to share a lot of interesting information about the Old Dragon, his servants and the creatures and dangers to be found in other chambers. After all, he does not much care whether the intruders learn a few trivial secrets if it means a bit of entertainment, particularly when he does not mean to let his interlocutors live. The only subject he will not touch is the Dragonblood ritual required to activate the portal at **Area W9**, about which he is bound to keep silent.

Draav Vulkaar, Butler of the Wyrms Caves (Old Red Dragon): CR 20; Gargantuan dragon (fire); HD 30d12+240, hp 435; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (clumsy); AC 35, touch 6, flat-footed 35; Base Atk +30; Grp +55; Atk +40 melee (4d6+13, bite); Full Atk +40 melee (4d6+13, bite) and +40 melee (2d8+6, 2 claws) and +37 melee (2d6+6, 2 wings) and +37 melee (2d8+19, tail slap); Space/reach 20 ft./15 ft. (bite 20 ft.); SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+19, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to fire, *sleep* and paralysis, low-light vision, vulnerability to cold, spell resistance 24; AL CE; SV Fort +25, Ref +17, Will +23; Str 36, Dex 10, Con 26, Int 21, Wis 22, Cha 21.

THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

Skills and Feats: Appraise +38, Bluff +38, Concentration +41 (+45 when casting defensively), Diplomacy +42, Disguise +5 (+7 acting in character), Intimidate +40, Knowledge (arcana) +38, Listen +41, Search +38, Sense Motive +39, Spellcraft +40, Spot +41, Survival +6 (+8 following tracks); Ability Focus (breath weapon), Alertness, Cleave, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (bite).

Breath Weapon (Su): 60 foot cone of fire, damage 16d10 fire, Reflex half DC 35.

Crush (Ex): Area 20 foot by 20 foot, Medium or smaller creatures take 4d6+19 points of bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 33) or be pinned; grapple bonus +55.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 240 foot radius, HD 29 or less, Will DC 30 negates.

Spell-Like Abilities: 8/day—*locate object*; 3/day—*suggestion* (DC 18); Caster level 11th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Sorcerer spells known (6/8/7/7/7/5; save DC 15 + spell level): 0th—*arcane mark, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, mending, message, prestidigitation, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*disguise self, magic missile, reduce person, silent image, ventriloquism*; 2nd—*blur, eagle's splendour, invisibility, touch of idiocy, web*; 3rd—*blink, dispel magic, protection from energy, slow*; 4th—*greater invisibility, stonewall, phantasmal killer*; 5th—*teleport, wall of force*. Caster Level 11th.

Tail Sweep (Ex): 30 foot radius, Small or smaller creatures suffer 2d6+19 points of crushing damage; Reflex half DC 32.

Treasure

Draav Vulkaar's hoard consists of 18,000 gold pieces, mostly scattered along the floor with a few thousand distributed among three large open coffers. There are a staff and a long spear half-buried among the coins; the staff, draped in what seems to be the fur of a gigantic wolf, is made of pure white wood, carved with strange runes of pre-Morudhain make (*staff of life*, 33 charges). The long spear is

of black wood, with a tip of dark silver that reads 'Crannoch's Ghost' in archaic Morudhain (Decipher Script check DC 25); it works as a +2 *ghost touch longspear*. The coffers also include a total of 2,200 platinum pieces among the three; finally, each coffer has the following additional contents:

First coffer: six agates of various colours (15 gp each) in a silk pouch, carved wood box containing an oversized ruby (4,600 gp) and a pair of silvered six-sided dice (12 gp), a bar of fine soap (110 gp), a fine fur coat (460 gp), a folded silk nightgown (1,950 gp), a *ring of evasion* and two zircon-inlaid silver earrings (390 gp each) inside a lacquered box, a pearl necklace (3,300 gp) and a stunning golden chalice with carved dragons and rubies (9,900 gp)

Second coffer: a jade amulet shaped like a snake's rattle (770 gp), a jewelled silk mask (2,050 gp), seven bloodstone gems (55 gp each) scattered among the coins, a silver hammer (1,000 gp), a jewelled gold cosmetics case (960 gp) containing a sewing needle of purest platinum (1,000 gp) and four ivory jester playing cards (1,300 gp each), an alchemical quicksilver mirror (1,200 gp), a wooden case containing two sheets of finest exotic parchment (100 gp each) and a fine writing quill (120 gp), a silver and electrum flute (1,100 gp), a small mosaic box with the figure of a charging mounted knight (2,900 gp), a fine crystal crown (600 gp) a large bag containing seven gold and silver cutlery sets (275 gp each) and a solid gold apple (3,650 gp)

Third coffer: A smaller iron chest containing four red spinels (90 gp each), two violet garnets (600 gp each), a golden key (15 gp) and two silver earrings (10 gp each), 50 feet of fine exotic rope (20 gp), three flasks of exotic perfumes (100 gp each), four figurines representing four elemental genies (800 gp each), a *necklace of prayer beads* (one is a *bead of summons*), a case containing a sheet of written parchment (the 'impenetrable poem', treat as a *wall of force* scroll), a demonskin pouch containing a fiery yellow corundum (1,150 gp) and a fire opal (980 gp), a small iron stick with a silver open palm carved on one end (*wand of dispel magic*) and two Medium short swords with gold hilts, sheathed in silk scabbards (6,400 gp each); these are 'Spike' and 'Scale'; a set of adamantite short swords made to be used together.

THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

In addition, there is a masterwork quarterstaff inlaid with moonstones (1,300 gp) resting against a cave wall, while a silk cloak embroidered with dark images of devils and dragons (450 gp) hangs from another wall. Beside this cloak hangs a fine stained glass pane depicting an Athan saint (2,300 gp)

Finally, there is a secret compartment below the cave floor; finding it requires a successful Search check (DC 40) and opening it requires a successful Open Lock check (DC 40). The compartment contains a wooden box, also locked (Open Lock DC 45) which in turn contains a *rod of flame extinguishing* with 33 charges.

Wb: The Playground

You arrive to an enormous cave, more than a hundred feet across and probably many hundred feet high. The ceiling can be guessed at, rather than seen, somewhere up there at such an unimaginable height it does your head in just looking around. The cave walls are speckled with myriad perches, recesses and spikes, making the great cave a truly mind-boggling view. In the middle of the cave floor, there are several wide stone steps leading up to a platform from which a tunnel continues ahead. The chamber has two more exits leading left and right. A few dozen feet above the ground, on a lower ledge against the far wall, there is a row of what appear to be gigantic, almost life-size dragon statues, resting on all fours as if watching over the passage. Upon closer inspection, the whole statue row seems to be a display of the five species of chromatic dragon; one member of each type...

This immense cave is the last stop before facing the test at **Area W9**, leading to the Temple of the Wyrms (**Area X**). There are four exits from the cave; a large passage to the south, a narrower tunnel leading north to **Area W9** and two exits on the east and west walls leading to **Areas W7** and **W8** respectively.

Creatures (EL 19)

The cave is also the playground of five chromatic dragons – all of them the spawn of the Old Dragon. They pose as statues in a row, perfectly immobile on their rock ledge above the north exit, bound to their father's cave in body and soul. As soon as a living creature goes beyond the stone steps across

the chamber and approaches the north wall, the 'statues' leap down from their perch, attacking their enemies in unison. Any intruder will have to deal with the five children of the Nameless Wyrms, all at the same time.

Mature Adult Black Dragon: CR 14; Huge dragon (water); HD 22d12+110, hp 253; Init +4; Spd 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 29, touch 8, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +22; Grp +38; Atk +28 melee (2d8+8, bite); Full Atk +28 melee (2d8+8, bite) and +26 melee (2d6+4, 2 claws) and +26 melee (1d8+4, 2 wings) and +26 melee (2d6+12, tail slap); Space/reach 15 ft./10 ft. (bite 15 ft.); SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+12, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to acid, *sleep* and paralysis, low-light vision, spell resistance 21, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +15; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Diplomacy +4, Escape Artist +25, Hide +19, Intimidate +27, Listen +29, Move Silently +27, Search +27, Sense Motive +17, Spot +29, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks), Use Rope +0 (+2 when tying knots); Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Stealthy.

Breath Weapon (Su): 100 foot line of acid, damage 14d4, Reflex half DC 26.

Crush (Ex): Area 15 foot by 15 foot, Small or smaller creatures take 2d8+12 points of bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 26) or be pinned; grapple bonus +38.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 210 foot radius, HD 21 or less, Will DC 23 negates.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*darkness*; 1/day—*corrupt water*. Caster level 7th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Sorcerer spells known (6/7/5; save DC 12 + spell level): 0th—*daze, mage hand, message, prestidigitation, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*chill touch, magic missile, obscuring mist, shield*; 2nd—*blur, ghoul touch*. Caster Level 5th.

THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

Mature Adult Blue Dragon: CR 16; Huge dragon (earth); HD 24d12+120, hp 276; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), burrow 20 ft.; AC 31, touch 8, flat-footed 31; Base Atk +24; Grp +41; Atk +31 melee (2d8+9, bite); Full Atk +31 melee (2d8+9, bite) and +26 melee (2d6+4, 2 claws) and +26 melee (1d8+4, 2 wings) and +26 melee (2d6+13, tail slap); Space/reach 15 ft./10 ft. (bite 15 ft.); SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+13, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to electrical damage, *sleep* and paralysis, low-light vision, sound imitation, spell resistance 22; AL LE; SV Fort +19, Ref +14, Will +17; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats Bluff +30, Concentration +32 (+36 casting defensively), Diplomacy +7, Disguise +3 (+5 acting in character), Escape Artist +27, Intimidate

+5, Knowledge (arcana) +30, Listen +32, Search +30, Sense Motive +30, Spellcraft +32, Spot +32, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks), Use Rope +0 (+2 with knots); Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (Illusion), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Spell Focus (Illusion).

Breath Weapon (Su): 100 ft. line of electrical energy, damage 14d8, Reflex half DC 27.

Crush (Ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft., Small or smaller creatures take 2d8+13 points of bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 27) or be pinned; grapple bonus +41.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 210 ft. radius, HD 23 or less, Will DC 25 negates.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*create/destroy water, ventriloquism* (DC 15). Caster level 7th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Sorcerer spells known (6/7/7/5; save DC 14 + spell level for Illusion spells, DC 13 + spell level for all other spells): 0th—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, message, prestidigitation*; 1st—*colour spray, disguise self, obscuring mist, silent image, ventriloquism*; 2nd—*blur, invisibility, mirror image*; 3rd—*blink, displacement*. Caster Level 3rd.

Mature Adult Green Dragon: CR 16; Huge dragon (air); HD 23d12+115, hp 264; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 40 ft.; AC 30, touch 8, flat-footed 30; Base Atk +23; Grp +40; Atk +31 melee (2d8+9, bite); Full Atk +31 melee (2d8+9, bite) and +28 melee (2d6+4, 2 claws) and +28 melee (1d8+4, 2 wings) and +28 melee (2d6+13, tail slap); Space/reach 15 ft. /10 ft. (bite 15 ft.); SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+13, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 120



THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

ft., immunity to acid, *sleep* and paralysis, low-light vision, spell resistance 22, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +16; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +29, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +3 (+5 acting in character), Escape Artist +26, Hide +18, Intimidate +15, Listen +31, Move Silently +26, Search +29, Sense Motive +29, Spot +31, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks), use rope +0 (+2 with knots); Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite).

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone of corrosion gas, damage 14d6 acid, Reflex half DC 26.

Crush (Ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft., Small or smaller creatures take 2d8+13 points of bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 26) or be pinned; grapple bonus +40.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 210 ft. radius, HD 22 or less, Will DC 24 negates.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*suggestion* (DC 16). Caster level 7th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Sorcerer spells known (6/7/7/5; save DC 13 + spell level): 0th—*daze, flare, ghost sound, mage hand, message, prestidigitation, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*chill touch, grease, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, true strike*; 2nd—*acid arrow, blur, cat's grace, summon swarm, touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*slow, stinking cloud, vampiric touch*. Caster Level 7th.

Mature Adult Red Dragon: CR 18; Huge dragon (fire); HD 25d12+150, hp 312; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 32, touch 8, flat-footed 32; Base Atk +25; Grp +44; Atk +35 melee (2d8+11, bite); Full Atk +35 melee (2d8+11, bite) and +33 melee (2d6+5, 2 claws) and +32 melee (1d8+5, 2 wings) and +32 melee (2d6+16, tail slap); Space/reach 15 ft. /10 ft. (bite 15 ft.); SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+16, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to fire, *sleep* and paralysis, low-light vision, spell resistance 18, vulnerability to cold, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +20, Ref +14, Will +18; Str 33, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +32, Concentration +34, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +4 (+6 acting in character), Escape Artist +28, Intimidate +34, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +32, Listen +34, Search +32, Sense Motive +32, Spot +34, Survival +4 (+6 when following tracks or underground), Use Magic Device +32, Use Rope +0 (+2 with knots); Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (bite).

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone of fire, damage 14d10, Reflex half DC 28.

Crush (Ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft., Small or smaller creatures take 2d8+16 points of bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 28) or be pinned; grapple bonus +44.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 210 ft. radius, HD 24 or less, Will DC 26 negates.

Spell-Like Abilities: 7/day—*locate object*. Caster level 9th.

Sorcerer spells known (6/7/7/7/5; save DC 14 + spell level): 0th—*acid splash, daze, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, mage hand, ray of frost, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*chill touch, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shocking grasp, true strike*; 2nd—*acid arrow, resist energy, scorching ray, web*; 3rd—*dispel magic, lightning bolt, protection from energy*; 4th—*stoneskin, wall of fire*. Caster Level 9th.

Mature Adult White Dragon: CR 12; Huge dragon (cold); HD 21d12+105, hp 241; Init +4; Spd 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor), burrow 60 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 28, touch 8, flat-footed 28; Base Atk +21; Grp +37; Atk +28 melee (2d8+8, bite); Full Atk +28 melee (2d8+8, bite) and +26 melee (2d6+4, 2 claws) and +25 melee (1d8+4, 2 wings) and +25 melee (2d6+12, tail slap); Space/reach 15 ft. /10 ft. (bite 15 ft.); SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+12, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., icewalking, immunity to cold, *sleep* and paralysis, low-light vision, spell resistance 20, vulnerability to fire; AL CE; SV Fort +17, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

THE TEMPLE OF THE WYRM

Skills and Feats: Escape Artist +24, Hide +16, Move Silently +24, Intimidate +25, Listen +27, Search +25, Spot +27, Use Rope +0 (+2 with knots); Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw), Weapon Focus (bite).

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone of cold, damage 7d6, Reflex half DC 25.

Crush (Ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft., Small or smaller creatures take 2d8+12 points of bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a Reflex save (DC 26) or be pinned; grapple bonus +38.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 210 ft. radius, HD 20 or less, Will DC 21 negates.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*fog cloud, gust of wind* (DC 13). Caster level 7th. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Sorcerer spells known: (6/6; save DC 11 + spell level): 0th—*daze, flare, mage hand, ray of frost, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*magic missile, obscuring mist, shocking grasp*. Caster Level 3rd.

W9: The Wyrmother

The feeling that invades you as you approach the end of the tunnel defies description. There is tranquillity but also terror, a sensation of darkness and suffocation but also of peace and sleep. There is warm and rest but also darkness and chaos; like wanting to stay here forever but also wishing to run madly away – something that plays at your deepest strings and yet remains just beyond your understanding...

The cave at the end of this tunnel seems to be entirely made of smoky rock crystal; it radiates a feeling of peace that contrasts starkly with the dreadful atmosphere of the rest of the Wyrmm Caves, without fully dissipating it. In fact, the presence of the Wyrmother (see below) has turned this cave into an almost supernaturally attractive spot for resting; anyone can rest safely in this cave without having any encounters or calling the attention of any of the Wyrmm Caves' denizens.

Creatures

This cave is a sanctuary for the Wyrmother, the spirit that gave birth to the Old Dragon. She has lived here

ever since her spawn came to live here, eternally watching over the evil she begat in the beginning of time. The Wyrmother's immortal presence is bound to these caves, just like all the other mighty creatures of chaos that have been drawn here throughout the millennia; just like the Nameless Wyrmm itself is trapped in the timeless Temple below (**Area X**). It could be said the Wyrmother is the true spirit of Mount Moru, the true ghost animating it, the origin and root of everything that exist inside the mountain; her full history and nature are a mystery anyway. She could have been a mortal woman, chosen millennia ago to give birth to the Dragon – or maybe she is an avatar of a true Mother Goddess, perhaps Mahua herself (see page 26 of *The Dragon Stone*). Whatever she is, she is immortal and she gave birth to the Evil of Mount Moru.

The Wyrmother appears not as a corporeal entity but a blurred, barely distinguishable image behind the translucent rock crystal walls of the cave, not unlike a ghost or an animated painting – she cannot interact with the Player Characters directly, as she is confined to the two dimensions of the tunnel walls. Touching a wall does not affect the Wyrmother; if the tunnel walls are damaged, her presence simply disperses from the damaged wall and reforms in a different section.

Despite her apparent inability to interact physically with other creatures, the Wyrmother can freely communicate with intelligent beings that visit her caves; if properly asked to, she can provide safe rest and information. She knows what must be done to activate the portal at **Area W9** but she does not know how to procure the blood of a dragon god; she also knows exactly what creatures live in each of the cave's chambers, their powers, history and abilities. If The Wolf (see page 14) is travelling with the Player Characters, the Wyrmother recognises him for what he truly is and gives the Player Characters a special blessing for having him in the group. The Wyrmother also gives her special blessing if the Player Characters have the Unicorn horn (see page 78) with them. The Wyrmother's special blessing consists of casting a *protection from fire* spell (caster level 20th) on the entire party. The Player Characters sense they have received a blessing, though a successful Spellcraft check (DC 45) is required to identify exactly what the Wyrmother did.

W8: Chaoth, the Titan of the Abyss

The tunnel ends abruptly in a deep chasm, so dark it turns your mind inside out. The abyss does not seem to end; in fact it feels like it goes all the way down to the eternal void itself...

The immeasurably deep chasm in this cave leads directly to the Outer Planes, the external worlds of chaos and absolute, inchoate darkness that predated the gods and their creation. Even nearing this place of primal madness does things to the mind; all living, intelligent creatures within 60 feet of the chasm must succeed on a Will save (DC 20) each round or be affected as per a *confusion* spell during that round.

THE CHAMBER

There *is* a chamber somewhere, down in this endless chasm; a place of such concentrated chaos and madness that it cannot be said to truly exist. As the chasm is simply a bottomless pit that goes on forever, the only way to reach this secret chamber is by interdimensional means of travel such as *astral projection*, *ethereal jaunt*, *plane shift* or *teleportation*. There are two permanent effects active in this chamber:

- Living creatures must still make a successful Will save each round to avoid being *confused*, only the save DC increases to 30.
- All lawful-aligned creatures suffer a -4 penalty on all checks.
- All creatures with the lawful subtype suffer 1 point of damage each round they remain in the area; nothing can prevent this loss of hit points except for magic such as a *wish* or *miracle*.

Creatures (EL 21)

The chamber is home to Chaoth, the Titan of the Abyss. He was the first living creature to come to the Wyrms Caves; his was the aura and presence that called all the other creatures here, including the Nameless Wyrms themselves. However, the presence of the Nameless Wyrms has become far stronger than that of Chaoth, so the mad titan has become magically bound to the Wyrms, just like the other creatures used to be bound to Chaoth. The titan has never realised this; he is barely aware of the existence of the Wyrms themselves or the fact his entire pocket plane has been shifted to the Nameless

Wyrms aura of influence. He simply *is*, carrying on with his mad, cosmic existence, without paying any heed to the Caves, the Wyrms or Mount Moru; all the more reason not to realise the presence of any intruders in his cave unless his attention is directly called upon – not a wise move for any mortal or immortal creature to make.

Chaoth looks like an amorphous, vaguely humanoid shape of immense size and a thick that seems made of pure darkness. His eyes blaze with a ruddy light and his voice sounds like the rumour of a faraway cataclysm.

If inquired about any subject, Chaoth merely ignores the inquirer, unless the question is made in such a way as to ensure the titan's attention, such as magically *enlarging* the speaker or flying right before Chaoth's face and speaking directly to it. Chaoth knows a lot of things about divinity and infinity, though he does not want to share his knowledge with mere mortals, barely worthy of his attention to begin with, much less of his wisdom. If asked specifically at the Dragon Seal test, he replies:

CHAOTH KNOWS

GODS ARE BORN

CHAOTH KNOWS HOW TO SPAWN GODS

DRAGONS ARE THE FATHERS OF ALL GODS

THERE IS JUST ONE MOTHER

GIVE THE BLOOD OF A DRAGON TO THE MOTHER

AND IT SHALL BE THE BLOOD OF A GOD

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If provoked into combat, Chaoth does not actually fight; he barely reacts against the Player Characters, as a human would react to an insect. If the Player Characters prove themselves a true danger, Chaoth truly becomes mad and attacks with a barrage of chaotic, unpredictable effects.

For the statistics for Chaoth, see 'Titan' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

Wq: The Dragon Seal

You reach a strangely cold natural cave. The ceiling is lower here than in the rest of these tunnels; the cave is featureless other than the stalactites - and a large, glowing symbol on the floor.

This is a circular (or conical if one counts the tapering south entrance) cave, 70 foot wide by 30 foot tall. It has an unspoiled aura of deepest and most ancient evil, having never been visited by an intelligent being in almost nine thousand years. The cave is pure natural, unworked stone, except for a 30 foot wide, spiral bas-relief carved on the floor; this spiral is disquietingly similar to the sign by which the Morudhain depicted the Old Dragon.

A successful Search check (DC 35) or Appraise check (DC 30) reveals the spiral bas-relief looks like it is intended to receive a liquid.



This cave is the final chamber of the Wyrms Caves and the access to the Temple of the Wyrms, where the Old Dragon has remained for nine millennia. The Temple, with all its arcane secrets and dangers, with the Nameless Wyrms that was imprisoned inside it and the secret to the evil of Mount Moru and the Morudhain Lands, lies beyond the magical portal in this cave.

THE TEST

The only way to activate the portal and thus access **Area X** is to pour the blood of a dragon god on the spiral bas-relief. As the nameless Wyrms is the only dragon god in the vicinity, this seal is theoretically unbreakable. However, the blood of a dragon god *can* be imitated; if the Wyrmother (**Area W7**) blesses the blood of an immortal dragon, her intimate link with the Nameless Wyrms will make the blood powerful enough to activate the seal. The only two creatures that count as immortal dragons in these caves are the Dragon of the Depths (**Area W2**) and the Dragon of the Ayres (**Area W2**); the blood of either of them should be enough to activate the portal if previously blessed by the Wyrmother. No living creature in the caves, not even the Wyrmother, knows of this secret process to create dragon god's blood; the only creature in the Wyrms Caves that knows it is Chaoth, the Titan of the Abyss (**Area W8**), for he knows the true nature of divinity and has actually seen gods being born. In addition, the ghost of Murathos the Tarnished Bronze, if the Player Characters encountered him before, might have provided the information if the Games Master felt kind.

As soon as the blood of a dragon god is poured on the spiral bas-relief, it turns into a magical portal; from this moment on, anyone stepping on the portal is immediately transported to **Area X1** in the Temple of the Nameless Wyrms.

Area X: Temple of the Nameless Wyrms

More than a dungeon level, the Temple of the Nameless Wyrms is a plane unto itself; a pocket dimension created by unknown forces of chaos and death. The Temple blocks the access to the cave where the Old Dragon lies in eternal sleep; its chambers exist outside the normal flow of reality, though they are connected to both the Wyrms Caves

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THE TEMPLE OF THE NAMELESS WYRM AS A DUNGEON

The Temple of the Nameless Wyrms was built from the very essence of nothingness; its foundations rest on the primal non-creation at the beginning of time. As a result, its masonry is sturdy enough for gods to live in – or be trapped within. Every wall in the Temple has a hardness of 16, Break DC 80 and 720 hp per 10 foot by 10 foot square. All doors are also otherworldly stone, with hardness 16, Break DC 48 and 120 hit points each. They have no locks so they have no Open Lock DC. Both the walls and doors are

under a permanent *antimagic field* effect; no spell or effect can dispel this *antimagic field* unless it comes from a godlike source.

The Temple of the Nameless Wyrms has no natural sources of illumination, yet an otherworldly, alien light permeates the entire area. This illumination equals torchlight in all respects except for its strange, unnerving hue.

Random Encounters in the Temple of the Nameless Wyrms

There are no random encounters in **Area X**; nothing can ‘wander about’ here.

below Mount Moru and the cave of the Nameless Wyrms itself (**Area X6**).

The only way to reach the Temple of the Nameless Wyrms is to successfully enact the Dragonblood Ritual on the Dragon Seal at **Area W9**, which activates the portal leading to **Area X1**.

X1: The Spiral Room

You appear in a circular stone room with four stone doors and a spiral-shaped carving on the floor. The stone here is of such a strange colour it defies description – it is actually a colour you had never seen before; just looking at it brings an indescribable feeling of nausea and horror to the back of your mind, so alien it is to your senses. As you wonder at this you feel, rather than see, an indescribable, unnamed horror descending upon you from the darkness above...

This room is both the Temple’s entrance and its core. It is a 70 foot wide circle, made of the same unnatural masonry as the rest of the Temple, with a door on each of the four directions. There is a spiral-shaped symbol on the chamber floor, which looks exactly like the Morudhain’s sign for the Old Dragon.

THE PORTAL

The symbol on the chamber floor is the other side of the portal coming from **Area W9** at the Wyrms Caves, only it does not work; to exit the Temple of the Wyrms it is necessary to activate the portal again, this time from here. The portal may only be

activated by facing the Four Tests at areas **X2** to **X5** (see the corresponding sections below). Once all four Tests have been overcome, the symbol glows and becomes a portal; anyone stepping through this portal is immediately transported out of the Temple of the Wyrms and into the cave of the Old Dragon himself (**Area X6**) for the final battle in the saga.

Creatures (EL 18)

The Spiral Room is not without a guardian. A creature of pure chaos, a formless aberration made of the mutated bodies of hundreds of dragons – all of them attracted to Mount Moru by the Nameless Wyrms – has been stationed here to watch the Temple. It falls down upon the first intruders that come through the portal, filled with bloodlust.

Dragon Abomination (Advanced Half-Dragon chaos beast): CR 18; Large dragon; HD 24d10+96; hp 228; Init +4; Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +24; Grp +38; Atk +34 melee (1d6+10 plus corporeal instability, claw) or +33 melee (1d8+10 plus corporeal instability, bite); Full Atk +34 melee (1d6+10 plus corporeal instability, 2 claws) and +28 melee (1d8+5 plus corporeal instability, bite); Space/reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, corporeal instability; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to critical hits, fire, *sleep*, transformation and paralysis effects, low-light vision, spell resistance 15; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +14, Will +14; Str 30, Dex 11, Con 19, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +2, Climb +17, Escape Artist +26, Hide +22, Jump +32, Listen +26, Search

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+27, Spot +26, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks), Tumble +28, Use Rope +0 (+2 with knots); Ability Focus (breath weapon), Awesome Blow, Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw).

Breath Weapon: 30 foot cone of dark fire, 6d8 damage, Reflex save (DC 28) halves.

Corporeal Instability: Any living creature touched by the dragon abomination must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 26, Constitution-based) or be affected by corporeal instability as detailed under 'Chaos Beast' in Chapter One of the *MM*.

DEVELOPMENT

If the Wolf (see page 14) is with the party at this time, this is the time for him to reveal his true form and fight alongside the Player Characters against the blasphemy the Old Dragon made with the bodies of his kin. See the **Appendix** for more details about the Wolf, his history and his mission.



X2: The First Test

This circular chamber has no features except for a great bas-relief representing a naked, mature woman with a matronly and angelic air, full of kindness and motherly love but also vaguely tinted of darkness and monstrosity. The great carving's expression speaks of love but also of death; it radiates pain and terror but also peace and release.

This 50 foot wide room is one of the four chambers that make up the Nameless Wyrms' Test. All four Tests must be defeated for the portal at X1 to activate again.

The door to this chamber is a featureless stone slab, except for the spiral dragon symbol carved on its centre. The door opens by itself as soon as a living creature touches the symbol; there is no other way to open the door except by destroying it.

The far wall of the room has a 10 foot tall carving of a naked woman; she seems to be cradling a baby dragon in her arms. Her gaze radiates a mother's tenderness but also deep, smothering madness. A Player Character that has encountered the Wyrmother can recognise her features in the carved woman by succeeding at a Spot check (DC 10); if the Spot check result totals 30 or more, the character also senses she is *not* the Wyrmother – or maybe not *only* the Wyrmother...

As soon as a living creature enters the chamber, a voice deeper than the void and louder than death booms:

*Know there once was a mother
Among the dragon race;
She gave birth to disgrace:
The Evil Son, the Other.
She spurned her blood and brother
And tracked her child to Hell;
There in the depths she fell;
There she cast off her frame.
So you, who know my name
Must know who was the mother.*

The correct answer to this question is 'Aedhaine'; she, like the Wyrmother, gave birth to an evil dragon-spawn and followed him to her ruin inside the mountain, where she became a ghost that would forever haunt the depths. Any other

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answer activates the trap (see below). If the correct answer 'Aedhaine' is given, the carved figure gently crumbles to dust, as the booming voice thunders again:

*Let the Wyrmother go;
Let her time flow again.
For now, so ends the pain;
For now, at last I know.*

If an incorrect answer to the question is given, the voice booms 'Then Feel Her Loving Smother!!!' and the trap is activated (see below).

Once the correct answer has been given or the trap has activated its full effects, the voice becomes silent and the trap cannot be activated again; the door to the chamber opens automatically and cannot be closed again until all living creatures have left the room. As soon as all living creatures have left the room, the door closes automatically and melds into the wall; the room then disappears, becoming sealed off forever. At this point, the Test is considered defeated (either by surviving the trap or by giving the correct answer).

Traps (EL 17)

This room hides a terrible trap; when activated, the door slams shut and cannot be opened except by touching it from the outside. After this point, for every round a living creature spends inside the room, it is targeted by one of the ten *trap the soul* effects of the trap; these *trap the soul* effects continue until all creatures in the chamber have been *trapped* or all ten *trap the soul* effects have been used. In addition, for every round after the trap is activated, a *horrid wilting* effect (caster level 15) affects all living creatures that are still not *trapped*; this *horrid wilting* effect continues each round until all three *horrid wilting* effects have been used. If the trap is deactivated, all of its effects stop immediately and all *trapped* creatures are freed.

Mother Trap: CR 17; magic device; sound trigger; automatic reset; special bypass (uttering the word 'Aedhaine'); multiple traps (ten *trap the soul* traps, three *horrid wilting* traps); spell effect (*trap the soul*, 15th level wizard, DC 22 Will save negates), spell effect (*horrid wilting*, 15th level wizard, 15d6 points of damage, DC 22 Fort save halves); Search DC 32 each trap; Disable Device DC 32 each trap.

Note: This trap is really 13 CR 9 traps in one; the first ten are *trap the soul* effects that target each living creature in the chamber individually, the following three are consecutive *horrid wilting* effects, one each round, affecting everyone that is not *trapped* already. These effects are independent of each other.

X3: The Second Test

This circular chamber has no features except for a great bas-relief representing a man and a woman holding hands. They look like noble humans, judging from their clothes and bearing, except for their heads – they resemble those of dragons.

This 50 foot wide room is one of the four chambers that make up the Nameless Wyrms' Test. All four Tests must be defeated for the portal at X1 to activate again.

The door to this chamber is a featureless stone slab, except for the spiral dragon symbol carved on its centre. The door opens by itself as soon as a living creature touches the symbol; there is no other way to open the door except by destroying it.

The far wall of the room has a 10 foot tall carving of two richly dressed humanoids holding hands; they look like a human man and woman, except they have dragon's heads.

As soon as a living creature enters the chamber, a voice deeper than the void and louder than death booms:

*Know there once was a race
Of gods that lived with men;
We ruled the world and then
Vanished without a trace.
My kin forgot their place
And went to worship death
They lost their fiery breath
They took a mortal's frame.
So you, who know my name
Must know where is my race.*

The correct answer to this question is 'the Athans'; they were actually the descendants of the first dragons of the world, who left the mortal world and went to the Mountain to live as humans themselves. That was why they were like the Morudhain yet

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different; this is why they were so great, yet so empty; this is why they worshipped death yet could not love their life; they had forgotten what they were – they had forgotten themselves. Any answer other than ‘(the) Athans’ activates the trap (see below). If the correct answer is given, the carved figure gently crumbles to dust, as the booming voice thunders again:

*Let the Dragons go;
Let them be forgot.
For now, man I am not;
For now, at last I know.*

If an incorrect answer to the question is given, the voice booms ‘Then Feel Their Fiery Blaze!!!’ and the trap is activated (see below).

Once the correct answer has been given or the trap has activated its full effects, the voice becomes silent and the trap cannot be activated again; the door to the chamber opens automatically and cannot be closed again until all living creatures have left the room. As soon as all living creatures leave the room, the door closes automatically and melds into the wall; the room then disappears, becoming sealed off forever. At this point, the Test is considered defeated (either by surviving the trap or by giving the correct answer).

Traps (EL 19)

This room hides a fearsome trap; when activated, the door slams shut and cannot be opened except by touching it from the outside. After this point, a hellish blaze of white-hot fire invades the chamber, barraging every living creature inside it.

Blaze Trap: CR 19; mechanical trap; sound trigger; automatic reset; special bypass (uttering the word ‘Athans’); hellish blaze (30d6 fire, DC 35 Reflex save halves); Search DC 35; Disable Device DC 35; no market price.

Χα: The Third Test

This circular chamber has no features except for a great bas-relief representing the spiral symbol of the Dragon God. Its scales glint occasionally in the unnatural light.

This 50 foot wide room is one of the four chambers that make up the Nameless Wyrms’ Test. All four

Tests must be defeated for the portal at X1 to activate again.

The door to this chamber is a featureless stone slab, except for the spiral dragon symbol carved on its centre. The door opens by itself as soon as a living creature touches the symbol; there is no other way to open the door except by destroying it.

The far wall of the room has a 10 foot diameter carving of the Dragon Lord Holy Symbol; not the crude spiral of the Morudhain but the Athans’ sophisticated effigy.

As soon as a living creature enters the chamber, a voice deeper than the void and louder than death booms:

NOW YOU FACE THE DRAGON GOD!

After these words, the far wall crumbles in an explosion of rubble and smoke and a gigantic, metallic dragon strides through the opening.

Creatures (EL 19)

The creature is an advanced iron golem, fully corresponding to the statistics, powers and specifications of a common iron golem except for the increased Hit Dice and the fact it is actually shaped like a Huge dragon.

Advanced Iron Golem: CR 19; Huge construct; HD 39d10+40; hp 254; Init -2; Speed 30 ft.; AC 32, touch 7, flat-footed 32; Base Atk +29; Grp +52; Atk +42 melee (3d10+15, slam); Full Atk +42 melee (3d10+15, 2 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./ 10 ft.; SA breath weapon; SQ construct traits, damage reduction 15/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision; AL —; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 41, Dex 7, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1. *Skills and Feats:* —

Breath Weapon: 10 foot cube, cloud of poison gas (Fort DC 29, initial damage 1d4 Con, secondary damage 3d4 Con). The dragon golem can use this ability, as a free action, once every 1d4+1 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Magic Immunity: The dragon golem is immune to any spell or magical effect that allows spell resistance, with the following exceptions: Any magical attack that deals electricity damage *slows*

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the golem (as the spell) for three rounds (no save). Any magical attack that deals fire damage actually heals the golem by 1 point for every 3 points of damage it would normally deal; any hit points healed in excess of the golem's maximum total are gained as temporary hit points.

Once the dragon golem has been destroyed, the door to the chamber opens automatically and cannot be closed again until all living creatures have left the room. As soon as all living creatures have left the room, the door closes automatically and melds into the wall; the room then disappears, becoming sealed off forever. At this point, the Test is considered defeated (either by surviving the trap or by giving the correct answer).

XV: The Fourth Test

This circular chamber has no features except for a great bas-relief representing a robed man with a hood obscuring his features. He looks like an Athan priest or wizard; despite it being only a bas-relief, something in the man's demeanour betrays a great evil.

This 50 foot wide room is one of the four chambers that make up the Nameless Wyrms' Test. All four Tests must be defeated for the portal at X1 to activate again.

The door to this chamber is a featureless stone slab, except for the spiral dragon symbol carved on its centre. The door opens by itself as soon as a living creature touches the symbol; there is no other way to open the door except by destroying it.

The far wall of the room has a 10 foot tall carving of a hooded and robed man, whose features cannot be distinguished in the darkness.

As soon as a living creature enters the chamber, a voice deeper than the void and louder than death booms:

*Know there once was a man
Who thought himself a God;
Led people by the rod
Through paths of ruin and fall.
He knew he could know all
His kin had tried to hide
Yet such was their great pride*

*They fell – he was to blame.
So you, who know my name
Must know who was this man.*

The correct answer to this question is 'Aogarn'; he, like Amaros the Dragon Lord, led his own people to ruin in the name of his own insane quest to unleash the power of his own dragon blood. Any answer other than 'Aogarn' activates the trap (see below). If the correct answer is given, the carved figure gently crumbles to dust, as the booming voice thunders again:

*Let Amaros go;
Let him waste to dust.
For now, forget I must;
For now, at last I know.*

If an incorrect answer to the question is given, the voice booms 'Then Beat Him, If You Can!!!' and the trap is activated (see below).

Once the correct answer has been given or the trap has activated its full effects, the voice becomes silent and the trap cannot be activated again; the door to the chamber opens automatically and cannot be closed again until all living creatures have left the room. As soon as all living creatures leave the room, the door closes automatically and melds into the wall; the room then disappears, becoming sealed off forever. At this point, the Test is considered defeated (either by surviving the trap or by giving the correct answer).

Traps (EL 20)

This room hides a fearsome trap; when activated, the door slams shut and cannot be opened except by touching it from the outside. After this point, a rain of dark magical energy shoots forth from the carved hands of the bas-relief on the wall; for every round a living character spends inside the chamber, he is targeted by one of the ten maximised *energy drain* effects shooting from the wall.

Dark Energy Trap: CR 20; magic device; sound trigger; automatic reset; special bypass (uttering the word 'Aogarn'); multiple traps (ten *energy drain* (maximised) traps); spell effect (*energy drain* (maximised), 17th level wizard, bestows 8 negative levels, DC 23 Fort save partial); Search DC 32 each trap; Disable Device DC 32 each trap.

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Note: This trap is really ten CR 13 traps in one; each of these traps is an *energy drain* (maximised) effect targeting one of the living creatures in the chamber. These effects are independent of each other.

Xb: The Nameless WyrM

The cave is utterly dark. This must be the origin of darkness. This must be the end of the journey.

This is the Nameless WyrM.

He fills the entire cave with his dark presence.

He is ready.

*Thus shall the Dragon God be smitten,
Or else has awoken for ruin and woe.*

—Fiall Garnwynn

THE NAMELESS WYRM

Colossal Dragon (Evil)

Hit Dice: 39d12+546 (799 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares) burrow 20 ft.

AC: 41 (–8 size, +39 natural), touch 2, flat-footed 41

Base attack/Grapple: +39/+74

Attack: Bite +50 melee (6d8+19) or claw +50 melee (6d6+9)

Full attack: Bite +50 melee (6d8+19) and 2 claws +48 melee (6d6+9) and tail slap +48 melee (4d6+28)

Space/Reach: 60 ft./40 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, spell-like abilities, spells, sneak attack +9d6, tail sweep
Special Qualities: Blindness, blindsense 120 ft., damage reduction 15/magic, darkvision 30 ft., immunity to poison, *sleep* and paralysis, keen senses, low-light vision, resistance to acid 20, cold 20, electrical 20 and fire 20, spell resistance 30

Saves: Fort +35, Ref +21, Will +30

Abilities: Str 49, Dex 11, Con 39, Int 26, Wis 28, Cha 26

Skills: Bluff +50, Concentration +56 (+60 in combat), Diplomacy +12, Disguise +8 (+10 when acting in character), Hide +26, Intimidate +52, Knowledge (arcana) +50, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +50, Knowledge (history) +50, Knowledge (the planes) +50, Knowledge (religion) +50, Listen +53, Search +50, Sense Motive +51, Spellcraft +52, Spot +53, Survival +9 (+11 when following tracks, underground, or in other planes)

Feats: Ability Focus (breath weapon), Alertness, Blind-

Fight, Cleave, Combat Casting, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Quicken Spell-like Ability (*unholy blight*)

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 26

Treasure: None

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Advancement: —

Level adjustment: —

Here it is. The dragon.

The Nameless WyrM is a titanic, colourless dragon, 180 feet long and 60 feet wide. His wings have atrophied with age and misuse; his eyes are glazed over with the grey shroud of death. He is pure darkness and decay given form; the bringer of ruin, the true Morudhain God of Death.

COMBAT

The Nameless WyrM has been waiting for this battle ever since he slew Gamageth the Wolf at the beginning of time; back when dragons and gods were the same thing. He eagerly expects the reckoning with mortals, ready to die and let gentler



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gods take his place; conversely, if he wins the battle he will be content to hide again in his mountain, poisoning the roots of Mount Moru for another ten millennia. He attacks with the confidence of a god and the abandon of a demon, dark and hateful as evil itself, celebrating death as he rushes to deal it once again.

The Nameless Wyrms' attacks count as both magic and evil for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Tactics Round-By-Round

These are the Nameless Wyrms' favourite combat tactics during each round of combat; the Games Master is free to change them as needed or desired.

Round 1: The Nameless Wyrms opens with a quickened *unholy blight*; then he uses his breath weapon on all enemies in front of him. Afterwards, he tries to use his remaining move action to attempt a hide check, provided the cave is still dark enough for him to have concealment. When fighting, he tries to be as imposing and ruthless as possible, so as to take full advantage of his frightful presence ability.

Round 2: If the Nameless Wyrms failed to hide, he casts a quickened *greater invisibility* spell; then, he attempts to sneak attack an enemy he deems to be the spellcaster. He uses another quickened *unholy blight* afterwards.

Round 3: Casts *horrid wilting* and uses his last quickened *unholy blight*; attempts to use his remaining move action to hide, if possible.

Round 4: Casts a quickened *cloudkill* spell; at the same time, he uses his breath weapon again. If possible, he attempts to hide again using his move action.

Round 5: Casts *horrid wilting* and attempts to hide again, if possible.

Round 6: Casts quickened *blur* spell and enters melee, using full attack routine and attempt to sneak attack enemies if possible.

Round 7: Continues melee attack routine casting quickened spells such as *mirror image* or *slow*.

Round 8: Uses breath weapon and casts quickened spells such as *mirror image* or *slow*.

Round 9+: Full attack routine every round, using breath weapon when possible. From this moment onwards, he uses spells only against enemy spellcasters and only if they seem particularly dangerous. If threatened, he uses *invisibility* or *greater invisibility*, preferably in combination with sneak attack.

Breath Weapon (Su): 100-ft. cone, damage 26d10 fire, Reflex half DC 45; usable once every 1d4 rounds.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 300 ft. radius, HD 38 or less, Will DC 37 negates.

Spell-Like Abilities: 10/day—*invisibility*; 3/day—*death knell* (20), *unholy blight* (DC 22); 1/day—*destruction* (DC 25). Caster level 18th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Sorcerer spells known (6/8/8/8/8/7/7/7/6/3; save DC 18 + spell level): 0th—*arcane mark, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, message, prestidigitation, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*chill touch, magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*blur, false life, fog cloud, mirror image, spectral hand*; 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, slow, vampiric touch*; 4th—*bestow curse, contagion, greater invisibility, phantasmal killer*; 5th—*blight, cloudkill, mind fog, nightmare*; 6th—*circle of death, eyebite, shadow walk*; 7th—*insanity, symbol of death, waves of exhaustion*; 8th—*horrid wilting, maze*; 9th—*energy drain*. Caster Level 18th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Tail Sweep (Ex): 40 ft. radius, Medium or smaller creatures suffer 2d8+28 points of crushing damage; Reflex half DC 43.

Blindness (Ex): The Nameless Wyrms is blind; he cannot use any abilities that rely on sight and all opponents still have concealment against him. However, his blindsense and keen senses abilities, as well as his Blind-Fight feat, allow him to locate enemies almost normally. The Nameless Wyrms is so accustomed to blindness that it does not hamper his spellcasting abilities in the least. For him, darkness is the real sight – and the mystery is the only knowledge...

APPENDIX: NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

The following is a list of the Non-Player Characters and some unique monsters appearing in *The Blood of Dragons*.

Party Members and Companions

APICHAI NAKALASIN TASAKORN 'API'

Male 1st Level GnomeRogue

Small Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d6+1 (7 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 20 ft.

Armour Class: 15 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 leather armour), touch 13, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +0/-4

Attack: Short sword +1 melee (1d4/19-20) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d6/19-20)

Full Attack: Short sword +1 melee (1d4/19-20) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d6/19-20)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Sneak attack 1d6, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Gnome traits, low-light vision, trapfinding

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +0 (+1 vs. illusions)

Alignment: Chaotic Good

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 13

Skills: Appraise +3, Bluff +3, Craft (alchemy) +2, Disable Device +5, Escape Artist +6, Hide +10, Listen +4, Move silently +6, Open lock +6, Search +3, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +2, Use Magic Device +5.

Feats: Improved Initiative

CR: 1

Spell-like abilities: 1/day—*dancing lights* (DC 12), *ghost sound* (DC 12), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Possessions: Short sword, light crossbow, leather armour, backpack, bedroll, case with 10 crossbow bolts, grappling hook, pouch belt, 8 days trail rations, 50 foot silk rope, 10 sunrods, thieves' tools, 25 gp.

Api is a spunky if somewhat air-headed young gnome rogue from foreign lands, who got into adventuring because he was becoming 'dead bored' living at his mother's house. He seems to have a problem linking phrases and ideas, as if he was always thinking faster than he can talk. This is made even more obvious by Api's heavily accented Common, which makes the meaning of his phrases even harder to grasp. Even so, he is a brave and enthusiastic adventurer, undaunted by danger and hardship or such burdens as common sense.



AURELIA ALTASOFIA BACCHI

Female 1st Level Human Wizard

Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d4+3 (7 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 30 ft.

Armour Class: 12 (+2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10

Base Attack/Grapple: +0/+0

Attack: Quarterstaff +0 melee (1d6) or dagger +2 ranged (1d4/19-20)

Full Attack: Quarterstaff +0 melee (1d6) or dagger +2 ranged (1d4/19-20)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Spells

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +4

Alignment: Lawful Good

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Decipher script +7, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (architecture) +4, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Listen +4, Profession (archaeologist) +3, Speak Language (Athan secret tongue), Spellcraft +7, Spot +4 (+7), Survival +3

Feats: Athan Secret Tongue, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

CR: 1

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, mage hand, prestidigitation*; 1st—*comprehend languages, mage armour*.

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*comprehend languages, detect secret doors, identify, mage armour, magic missile, animate rope*

Possessions: Dagger, quarterstaff, backpack, bedroll, map case, flint and steel, bull's eye lantern, five oil flasks, 5 sheets of parchment, three iron pots, belt pouch, 8 days' trail rations, 10 sunrods, spellbook, spell component pouch, 24 gp.

Moony (familiar), owl: CR ¼; Tiny magical beast; HD 1d8; hp 3; Init +3; Spd 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 40 ft. (average); AC 18 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d4 -3, talons); Space/reach 2 ½ ft./0 ft.; SQ alertness, empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells; AL alignment; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Decipher Script +2, Knowledge (arcana)+2, Knowledge (architecture)-1, Knowledge (history) +2, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +0, Listen +14, Move Silently +17, Spellcraft +2, Spot +6*, Survival +3; Weapon Finesse.

Skills: Moony has a +8 racial bonus on Listen checks and a +14 racial bonus on Move Silently checks. *He also has a +8 racial bonus on Spot checks made in areas of shadowy illumination.

Aurelia is a lot like his father, having inherited his wilful drive; however, she has learned temperance from hardship and solitude, which allows her to keep her obsession mostly in check. Despite being a non-sense, intelligent and sensitive woman, finding her father – tying that loose end, as she says – has become a need for her. She is quite resolute without being aggressive, and gentle despite her strong personality.

CORMAC DRAKE

Male 1st Level Human Ranger

Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d8+3 (11 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft.

Armour Class: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 studded leather armour), touch 12, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+3

Attack: Masterwork short sword +5 melee (1d6+2/19-20) or dagger +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20) or longbow +3 ranged (1d8/x3)

Full Attack: Masterwork short sword +5 melee (1d6+2/19-20) or dagger +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20) or longbow +3 ranged (1d8/x3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. /5 ft.

Special Attacks: Favoured enemy (dragons)

Special Qualities: Wild empathy

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2

Alignment: True neutral

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 11

Skills: Hide +5, Craft (weaponsmithing) +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Profession (hunter) +3, Search +5, Spot +6, Survival +6.

Feats: Improved initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (short sword)

CR: 1

Possessions: Masterwork short sword (carved out of a dragon fang), composite longbow, dagger, studded leather armour, backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, 50 ft. rope, seven days of trail rations, five torches, quiver with 20 arrows, 52 gp.

Cormac Drake learned of his draconic heritage by plain instinct, as he has learned almost everything in life. He grew up alone, an orphan, among the Morudhain, who had found him beside his murdered parents near to the Moru Road. He always knew it was a dragon that killed them, one of the dragons that travel to Mount Moru regularly. However, he did not



discover his own dragon blood until he *felt* the ancient wyrm's evil deep within his own soul. He does not know where or when the dragon's blood entered his lineage, plus his dragon ancestry is too far removed to have a real effect in his body or mind, but he nevertheless knows it is true. Therefore, he left the Morudhain tribe that had so far been his only family and went to live in Meadowvale, where he set to work as a trapper and hunter for a few years. Last month he finally finished gathering the money and information he needed to undertake an expedition to Mount Moru itself, where he intends to make a living slaying the dragons that surely infest it.

Cormac carries an actual dragon fang he found during a reconnaissance trip to the Moru outskirts, which he shaped and carved to use as a short sword.

RANN SHIELDBORNE

Male 1st Level Human Cleric

Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d8+2 (10 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 16 (+4 scale mail, +2 heavy steel shield), touch 10, flat-footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +0/+4

Attack: Shortspear +4 melee (1d6+6)

Full Attack: Shortspear +4 melee (1d6+6)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. /5 ft.

Special Attacks: Turn undead 10/ day

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +6

Alignment: Lawful good

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 17

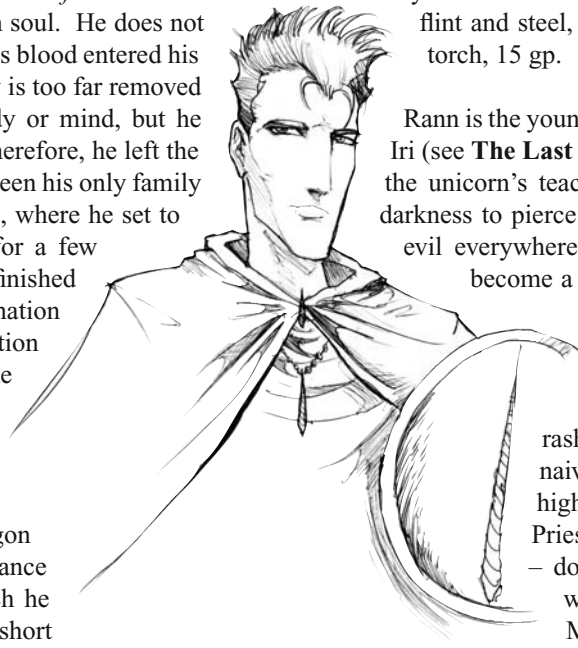
Skills: Concentration +6, Heal +11, Knowledge (religion) +4

Feats: Extra turning, Skill focus (Heal).

CR: 1

Domains: Good (cast good spells at +1 Caster Level)
Sun (greater turning: destroy turned undead 1/day).
Spells per day (3/2+1); save DC 14 + spell level:
0th—*guidance, resistance, virtue*; 1st—*detect undead, magic weapon, protection from evil**.

Possessions: Shortspear in the shape of a unicorn horn, scale mail, heavy steel shield, backpack, bedroll, holy



symbol of Iri of the Blessed Horn (silver), flint and steel, eight days of trail rations, torch, 15 gp.

Rann is the youngest cleric at the Temple of Iri (see **The Last Shrine**, page 12). He sees the unicorn's teachings about light seeking darkness to pierce it as an invitation to seek evil everywhere and fight it; he longs to become a champion of good causes, using the light of his god to annihilate evil. His peers fall just short of respecting him due to his rash behaviour and undeniable naiveté; however, some of the higher-ranking clerics – High Priest Deovain among them – do believe in Rann and are willing to let him join the Moru expedition.

THE WOLF

Male Gold Dragon (adult)

Medium Animal (augmented dragon)

Hit Dice: 23d12+115 (264 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares)

Armour Class: 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +23/+24

Attack: Bite +25 melee (1d8+1)

Full Attack: Bite +25 melee (1d8+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. /5 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, spell-like abilities, trip

Special Qualities: Alternate form, *luck bonus*

Saves: Fort +25, Ref +25, Will +28

Alignment: Lawful good

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 20, Wis 21, Cha 20

Skills: Bluff +13, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +28, Disguise +28 (+40 when acting as The Wolf), Hide +9, Intimidate +24, Jump +36, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (local) +25, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +15, Listen +30, Move Silently +9, Search +28, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +28, Spot +30, Swim +9, Survival +15 (+17 when following tracks)

Feats: Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (bite), Wingover.

CR: 11

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*bles*s. Caster level 7th.

Trip (Ex): If the Wolf hits with a bite attack, he can attempt to trip the opponent (+1 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking a free attack. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the Wolf.

The Wolf is actually Aurebaor, a disguised gold dragon, come to Mount Moru to investigate the endless string of dragon disappearances of the last few years. He assumes wolf shape for its hidden symbolism as related to Moru mythology, as well as the gold dragons' well-known penchant for assuming an innocuous form so they can travel alongside adventurers. That is exactly what Aurebaor intends to do; he expects for a party of adventurers to enter Mount Moru soon, so he can follow them in the guise of a stray wolf-dog.

The Wolf as a Companion

Aurebaor maintains his Wolf guise by using *Bluff* to pretend to fall unconscious after suffering a determined amount of damage (about 13 hp, as if he was a true wolf), never using his breath weapon and generally acting like a real animal to the point he himself believes it at times. Aurebaor truly goes out of his way to prevent his dragon guise from being discovered, until he finds the fate of the disappeared dragons. Up until that moment, he keeps the Wolf 'persona' regardless of circumstances, refraining from using his powers even when the life of a companion may hang in the balance – his mission to locate and unmask the evil force behind the dragons' disappearances is more important than anything else.

When Aurebaor returns to true dragon form, use the adult gold dragon statistics presented in the corresponding section under 'Dragon' in Chapter One of the *MM*, except he has Improved Natural Attack (bite) instead of Leadership and Weapon Focus (bite) instead of Negotiator.

Using The Wolf as a party companion may be unbalancing at the beginning of the game, as his power far surpasses what is expected from a 1st level companion. Since he is only included so he can help the Player Characters against the hardest, last encounter in the adventure (see **Temple of the Wyrms**, page 85), it could be a good idea to stave off his appearance until later in the saga, when the Players have at least finished Chapter Four (or even Chapter Five or Six).

If the Games Master wishes to introduce him earlier, he should be wary of letting the Wolf's true power surface, never letting him do anything a wolf would not be able to. Aurebaor's insistence in not using any of his powers, as well as 'falling unconscious' after 10 or 15 hit points of damage, should be enough to control his party involvement; however, Games Master judgment is required on whether to allow the Wolf to accompany the Player Characters or not.

Prologue: The Road Begins

OLD SMOKE-MAN

Male 10th level Morudhain Human Bard

Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 10d6 (38 hp)

Initiative: –2

Speed: 30 ft. (60 squares)

Armour Class: 11 (–2 Dex, +3 armour), touch 8, flat-footed 11

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+5

Attack: Quarterstaff +5 melee (1d6–2)

Full Attack: Quarterstaff +5 melee (1d6–2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Bardic music, countersong, *fascinate*, inspire competence, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, spells, *suggestion*

Special Qualities: Bardic Knowledge +14

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +9

Alignment: True Neutral

Abilities: Str 6, Dex 7, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +16, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +16, Perform (oratory) +19, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16, Survival +16.

Feats: Alertness, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Knowledge (history)), Skill Focus (Perform (oratory)), Spell Focus (Enchantment).

CR: 1

Spells Known (3/4/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level for Enchantment spells, DC = 13 + spell level for all other spells): 0th—*dancing lights*, *daze*, *ghost sound*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*; 1st—*comprehend languages*, *hypnotism*, *silent image*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd—*animal trance*, *enthral*, *suggestion*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *crushing despair*, *good hope*, *sculpt sound*.

Possessions: Masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork hide armour, smoking pipe.

Old Smoke-Man is the storyteller and lorekeeper of the Dragon Stone Clan. He knows nearly anything that happens or has happened in the Moru Country and is always willing to tell a story about it; his knowledge includes all the information contained in the **Old Smoke-Man's Tales** section.

Old Smoke-Man has a stern, gruff manner and an intense, penetrating gaze; his guttural voice is guaranteed to chill the bones of anyone listening to his stories, regardless of the mood or subject of the story itself. Other than this, he is a great source of information for anyone looking for some background about the Morudhain Lands.

Chapter One: The Goblin God

AKKAL TOR, THE GOBLIN GENERAL (LORD THUNDER)

Male Half Blue Dragon, 1st level Bugbear Fighter

Medium Dragon (goblinoid)

Hit Dice: 5d10+30 (58 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 22 (+1 Dex, +7 natural, +3 studded leather armour, +1 darkwood buckler), touch 18, flat-footed 21

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/+11

Attack: +1 *morningstar* +13 melee (1d8+8) or javelin +5 ranged (1d6+3) or bite +11 melee (1d6+7)

Full Attack: +1 *morningstar* +13 melee (1d8+8) and claw +9 melee (1d4+3) and bite +9 melee (1d6+3) or javelin +5 ranged (1d6+3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision, scent

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +3

Alignment: Lawful evil

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 12, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills: Climb +13, Hide +7, Intimidate +3, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Spot +10.

Feats: Alertness, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (*morningstar*).

CR: 5

Breath Weapon (Su): 60-foot line, 6d8 points of electrical damage, Reflex half DC 17.

Possessions: 5 javelins, spiked mace with carved lightning motifs (+1 *morningstar*), darkwood buckler

with the Stormcloud Company seal, masterwork studded leather armour, 3 *potions of cure light wounds*.

Akkal Tor is mostly a crass brute, although he has a rudimentary strategic mind. He is, anyway, a brave and effective leader, ready to die for the Stormcloud Company, and also a true believer of the Goblin God – although he fancies himself almost as powerful. He is extremely arrogant, which can make him somewhat reckless. He prefers to deal with foes at close range, only utilising his breath weapon attack if he has been reduced to a quarter of his maximum hit points or less.

Chapter Four: Lost Path

AIMHA BEPHODAL, THE LAST PRIEST-KING OF ARCHANEBOTH

Mummy, 2nd Level Fighter/3rd Level Cleric

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 8d12+2d10+3d8+3 (78 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Armour Class: 24 (+4 mithral shirt, +10 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 24

Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+15

Attack: Slam +15 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot) or adamantite mace +16 melee (1d6+7)

Full Attack: Slam +15 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot) or adamantite mace +16 melee (1d6+7)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Despair, mummy rot, rebuke undead 6/day, spells

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 5/–, darkvision 60 ft, undead traits, vulnerability to fire

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +11

Alignment: True Neutral

Abilities: Str 27, Dex 10, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 16

Skills: Concentration +4, Hide +7, Knowledge (religion) +1, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lighting Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness.

CR: 10

Despair (Su): The save DC against Aimha's despair ability is 17.

MummyRot (Su): The save DC against Aimha's Mummy Rot is 17.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, guidance, light, virtue*; 1st—*command, detect secret doors**, *doom, shield of faith*; 2nd—*detect thoughts**, *hold person, silence*.
*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (1/day, slay a creature with 3d6 hp or less), Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are class skills, cast Divination spells at +1 CL).

Possessions: Adamantite mace, mithral shirt, a single tear-shaped drop of brass (worth about 10,000 gp).

Aimha Bephodai is usually lost in his own musings and wonderings, to the point he appears truly dead to a casual observer. If provoked to attack, he still wonders aloud about the stone and the fate of Atha as he fights.

ANDWAR BACCHI

Male Ghost, 7th Level Human Wizard
Medium Undead (incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 7d12+3 (48 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: fly 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 12 (+2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10 (16 (+2 Dex, +4 deflection), touch 16, flat-footed 14 when manifested)

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+2

Attack: Dagger +2 melee (1d6) or +4 ranged (1d4)

Full Attack: Dagger +2 melee (1d6) or +4 ranged (1d4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Corrupting gaze, frightful moan, spells

Special Qualities: Rejuvenation, +4 turn resistance

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +6

Alignment: True neutral

Abilities: Str 8, Dex 12, Con —, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 18

Skills: Appraise +5, Decipher Script +15, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +13, Listen +10, Search +11, Speak Language (Athan secret tongue), Spellcraft +13, Spot +10.

Feats: Alertness, Athan Secret Tongue, Diligent, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

CR: 9

Corrupting Gaze (Su): 30 ft. gaze attack, 2d10 damage plus 1d4 Cha damage, Fort DC 17 negates.

Frightful Moan (Su): All living creatures within a 30 ft. spread are panicked for 2d4 rounds, Fort DC 17 negates. A creature that succeeds at this save cannot be affected by Andwar Bacchi's frightful moan ability for the next 24 hours.

Rejuvenation (Su): If destroyed or turned, Andwar's ghost reforms again after 2d4 days; the only way for his spirit to rest is if he succeeds in opening the door to the Tomb of Aimha Bephodai.

Spells Prepared (4/5/4/3/1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, disrupt undead, light, read magic*; 1st—*animate rope, comprehend languages, detect secret doors, erase, shield*; 2nd—*continual flame, darkvision, fox's cunning, locate object*; 3rd—*arcane sight, dispel magic, hold person*; 4th—*resilient sphere*. Save DCs are Intelligence-based.

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*animate rope, blur, burning hands, comprehend languages, detect secret doors, erase, mage armour, shield*; 2nd—*continual flame, darkvision, fox's cunning, locate object*; 3rd—*arcane sight, clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, hold person*; 4th—*arcane eye, resilient sphere*.

Possessions (ethereal): Dagger, five paper sheets, quill & ink, spellbook, spell components.

The ghost of Andwar Bacchi is distant and incoherent, prattling incessantly about his failed quest and the uselessness of life. The only way to set him to rest is by finding out the secret door at **H12**, which he was about to find when the undead guardians of **Area H** got to him; other than this, it is unlikely the Player Characters will get anything out of him except a violent reaction – he does not even recognise his daughter Aurelia if he sees her.

FIALL GARNWYNN

Male 6th level Dragontouched Human Ghost Bard
Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 7d12 (51 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 13 (+3 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/+4

Attack: —

Full Attack: —

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Bardic music, countersong,

fascinate, inspire courage +1, inspire competence, manifestation, malevolence, *suggestion*

Special Qualities: Bardic knowledge +12, incorporeal traits, low-light vision, rejuvenation, +4 turn resistance, undead traits

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +8

Alignment: Neutral good

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 10, Con —, Int 19, Wis 10, Cha 16

Skills: Bluff +13, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +20, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +10, Perform (oratory) +15, Profession (writer) +16, Sense Motive +11, Speak Language (Athan Secret Tongue), Spot +10.

Feats: Athan Secret Tongue, Negotiator, Skill Focus (Perform (oratory)), Skill Focus (Profession (writer)), Skill Focus (Diplomacy).

CR: 9

Malevolence (Su): The save DC against Fiall Garnwynn's malevolence ability is 18.

Spells Known (3/4/2; base DC = 11 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *lullaby*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*; 1st—*comprehend languages*, *erase*, *identify*, *unseen servant*; 2nd—*eagle's splendour*, *fox's cunning*, *locate object*.

Possessions: Scroll case containing his **Last Notes** (see page 50).

These are the statistics of the bard Fiall Garnwynn's ghost when manifested. If forced to fight, he prefers to use his malevolence ability and force the possessed creature to fight in his stead. However, he releases the host as soon as he ends the hostilities; he does not want to return to life, his only goal being to warn every traveller about the... 'dangers' is too tame a word for Garnwynn, 'eternal doom of the soul' would be more accurate... of exploring the depths of Mount Moru.

KAEDRU THE HUNTER

**Male Half-Green Dragon Human 6th Level Ranger/
1st Level Fighter**

Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 6d8+1d10+21 (57 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 23 (+3 Dex, +4 +1 *studded leather armour*, +6 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+11

Attack: Claw +11 melee (1d4+4) or +1 *longsword* +12 melee (1d8+1/19-20) or mighty composite longbow +11 ranged (1d8+4/x3)

Full Attack: +1 *longsword* +10/+5 melee (1d8+5/19-20) and masterwork shortsword +10/+5 melee (1d6+2/19-20) and bite +6 melee (1d6+2); or +1 *longsword* +12/+7 melee (1d8+1/19-20) and claw +6 melee (1d8+4) and bite +6 melee (1d6+2); or 2 claws +11 melee (1d4+4) and bite +6 melee (1d6+2); or mighty composite longbow +11/+6 ranged (1d8+4/x3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, favoured enemy (+4 magical beasts, +2 vermin), spells

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision, wild empathy

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +4

Alignment: Neutral evil

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Climb +6 (+8 using rope), Handle Animal +12, Hide +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +9, Move Silently +18, Ride +6, Search +7, Spot +12, Survival +12 (+14 when underground, avoiding hazards, in aboveground natural environments or following tracks), Use Rope +8.

Feats: Ability Focus (breath weapon), Combat Reflexes, Endurance^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armour (2), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Track^B, Two-Weapon Fighting^B.

CR: 9

Breath Weapon (Su): 30 foot cone of corrosive gas, 6d8 acid damage, Reflex DC 15 halves.

Spells Prepared (2); base DC = 12 + spell level: 1st—*alarm*, *magic fang*. Caster Level 3rd.

Possessions: Black steel serrated blade (treat as +1 *longsword*), masterwork shortsword, mighty composite longbow, +1 *studded leather armour of silent moves*, backpack, bedroll, bell, six flasks of acid, two flasks of alchemist's fire, 3 vials of antitoxin, *everburning torch*, two flasks of holy water, four smokesticks, ten sunrods, three tanglefoot bags, two thunderstones, 30 tindertwigs, 20 caltrops, 10 candles, map case, 30 feet of chain, 10 pieces of chalk, crowbar, two fishhooks, fishing net, flint and steel, grappling hook, four masterwork manacles, small steel mirror, 10 days of trail rations, 150 ft. silk rope, five sacks, sealing wax, sewing needle, signal

whistle, 1 lb. soap, shovel, waterskin, whetstone, climber's kit, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *dust of tracelessness*, *elixir of hiding*, quiver with 20 arrows.

Bleakhound (animal companion), Riding Dog: CR 2; Medium animal; HD 4d8+4; hp 25; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 21 (touch 13, flat-footed 18); Atk +5 melee (1d6+4, bite); SQ link, low-light vision, scent, share spells; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +8, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +3, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent); Alertness, Track.

Kaedru was a loner almost since he was born; rejected and despised for his dragon features and his naturally evil temper, he was forced to grow almost on his own, surviving as he could and maturing into a savage, ruthless predator as the savage beasts with which he spent most of his time. When he was old enough to live truly alone, Kaedru left the company of intelligent beings forever, retiring to a life of isolation and dedicated to hunt strange beasts for both sport and subsistence.

BLEAKHOUND

This great black husky malamute is Kaedru's animal companion and his only friend in the world; the dog has helped the hunter in finding and capturing his creatures for many years now. They always fight together, of course, fiercely defending each other with their own lives.

UBERTO VALCIO WENDOLINO

Male Human, 5th level Expert / 3rd level Aristocrat
Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 5d6+3d8+16 (49 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 15 (+4 chain shirt)

Base Attack: +5

Grapple: +6

Ranged: +5

Attack: dagger +7 melee, (1d4+2) dagger +6 ranged, (1d4+2)

Full Attack: dagger +7 melee, (1d4+2) dagger +6 ranged, (1d4+2)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5 ft.

Saves: Fort +3, Reflex +1, Will +8

Alignment: True Neutral

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Appraise (Int) +15, Bluff (Cha) +10, Decipher script (Int) +7, Diplomacy (Cha)+16, Gather Information (Cha)+10, Handle Animal (Cha) +6, Intimidate (Cha) +12, Knowledge (local) (Int) +8, Knowledge (nobility) (Int) +8, Knowledge (politics) (Int) +8, Listen (Wis) +9, Sense Motive (Wis) +11

Feats: Diligent, Persuasive, Negotiator, Skill Focus (appraise)

CR: 7

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, masterwork chain shirt, courtier's outfit, 21 days of trail rations.

Despite hardship, Valcio has not lost his hope that he will get out of the dungeon. He can still be affable and suave in spite of terror, particularly if his interlocutor shows the slightest chance of being able to lead him back to the surface.

Valcio is willing to give any of his wares in exchange for safe passage outside the dungeon. In case of need, he keeps the following merchandise for sale in the remains of his merchant's cart:

- Masterwork longsword
- Masterwork heavy steel shield
- 1 pound of salt
- 10 pounds spices
- 50 square yards of linen
- 50 square yards of silk
- 500 gold pieces worth of fine clothes
- 2 light crossbows
- 1 heavy crossbow
- 40 light crossbow bolts
- 4 short swords
- 3 daggers
- 2 suits of studded leather armour

And the following gems and jewellery in a locked coffer (Open Lock DC 40):

- Chalcedony (5 gp)
- Two drops of amber (100 gp each)
- Three black pearls (500 gp each)
- Bloodstone (50 gp)
- Emerald (1,000 gp)
- Two agates (10 gp each)
- Morudhain jewelled cold iron dagger (1,050 gp)
- Jewelled ring (1,000 gp)

Valcio's priority is of course to get out of the dungeon alive; nonetheless, he will also try to save his wares by any means necessary.

Chapter Five: Frost and Fire

ANATRI, THE FROST GIANT MATRIARCH

Female Half-White Dragon, Frost Giant 2nd Level Cleric

Large Dragon (cold)

Hit Dice: 14d10+98 +2d8+14 (198 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares) fly 80 ft. (average)

Armour Class: 25 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +4 hide armour, +13 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 25

Base Attack/Grapple: +11/+28

Attack: +1 *greataxe* +25 melee (3d6+20/x3) or claw +24 melee (1d6+13) or rock +11 ranged (2d6+13)

Full Attack: +1 *greataxe* +25/+20/+15 melee (3d6+20/x3) and bite +19 melee (1d8+6) or rock +11 ranged (2d6+13)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, rebuke/command undead 4/day, rock throwing

Special Qualities: Darkvision, immunity to cold, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision, rock catching, vulnerability to fire

Saves: Fort +19, Ref +3, Will +11

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Abilities: Str 37, Dex 9, Con 24, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13

Skills: Climb +28, Craft (weaponsmithing) +18, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +18, Jump +30, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perform (Sing) +9, Spot +19.

Feats: Ability focus (breath weapon), Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency (*greataxe*)^B, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (*greataxe*)^B.

CR: 13

Breath Weapon (Su): 30 foot cone, 6d8 points cold damage, Reflex half DC 26.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, guidance, resistance* (2); 1st—*bless, enlarge person**, *entropic shield, shield of faith*.
*Domain spell.

Domains: Strength (+2 to Strength 1/day), War (free Weapon Proficiency and Weapon Focus with *greataxe*).

Possessions: Big double axe with runes all over the blades (Large +1 *greataxe*), Large masterwork hide armour, war horn, giant bag containing 400 gp, three throwing rocks, some broken pieces of charcoal, 3 half-consumed candles, a musty old tinderbox, a dirty bone comb and hairpins, a dusty fur blanket, a dirty stone knife, some suspicious-looking meat, three sticks of incense and a set of divining runes.

MALADREV THE FIRE GIANT KING

Male Half-Red Dragon, Fire Giant 1st Level Fighter

Large Dragon (Fire)

Hit Dice: 16d10 +96 (184 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 30 ft. in half-plate armour (6 squares); base speed 40 ft.; fly 80 ft. (average)

Armour Class: 27 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +12 natural, +7 half-plate armour) touch 8, flat-footed 27

Base Attack/Grapple: +12/+31

Attack: Greatsword +28 melee (3d6+23+1d6 fire) or claw +26 melee (1d6+15) or rock +12 ranged (2d6+14 plus 2d6 fire)

Full Attack: Greatsword +28/+23/+18 melee (3d6+23+1d6 fire) and bite +21 melee (1d8+7) or 2 claws +26 melee (1d6+15) and bite +21 melee (1d8+7) or rock +12 ranged (2d6+14 plus 2d6 fire)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, rock throwing

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision, rock catching, vulnerability to cold

Saves: Fort +17, Ref +4, Will +9

Alignment: Lawful evil

Abilities: Str 40, Dex 9, Con 23, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13

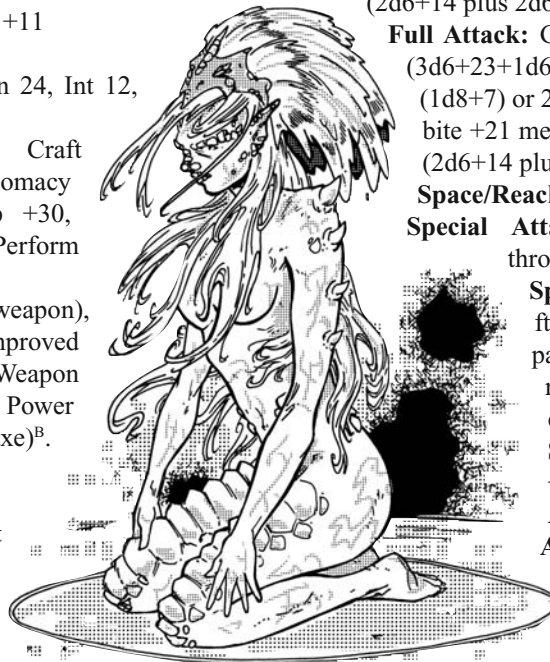
Skills: Climb +33, Craft (armoursmithing) +19, Craft (weaponsmithing) +19, Intimidate +20, Jump +33, Spot +20,

Survival +11.

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

CR: 13

Breath Weapon (Ex): 30 foot cone of fire, 6d8 points of fire damage. Reflex DC 23 halves.





Possessions: Big sword with runes all over the blade (Large +1 *flaming burst greatsword*), Large half-plate armour, giant bag containing four heated throwing rocks, a pouch full of charcoal pieces, a cracked yet useful drinking horn, a large iron knife, some charred bread and dried meat, a tinderbox, a whetstone and a box full of black grease.

TAWUNN TAMESTONE

Male Stone Giant Elder 3rd Level Cleric

Large Humanoid

Hit Dice: 17d8+85 (161 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 40 ft.

Armour Class: 30 (−1 size, +2 Dex, +11 natural, +4 +2 *hide armour*, +2 *ring of protection*), touch 13, flat-footed 28

Base Attack/Grapple: +12/+23

Attack: Quarterstaff +19 melee (1d8+11)

Full Attack: Quarterstaff +19/+14 melee (1d8+11) or 2 slams +18 melee (1d4+6) or rock +15 ranged (2d8+6)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Rebuke undead 5/day, rock throwing

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, rock catching

Saves: Fort +18, Ref +8, Will +12

Alignment: Neutral evil

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 15

Skills: Climb+15, Concentration +9 (+13 casting defensively), Heal +7, Hide +6*, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +18, Spot +19.

Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron will, Skill Focus (Knowledge (religion)).

CR: 12

Spell-like abilities: 1/day—*stone shape*, *stone tell*, *transmute mud to rock*, *transmute rock to mud*.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0th—*spell*, *spell*, *spell*, *spell*; 1st—*bane*, *command*, *magic stone**, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*bear's endurance*, *desecrate**, *silence*.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Earth (rebuke earth creatures or turn air creatures 5/day), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 CL).

Possessions: Stonestaff (treat as Large +1 *quarterstaff*), enchanted bearskin cloak (treat as +2 *hide armour*), rune-carved stone ring (*ring of protection*+2), carved stone amulet (*peripat of wisdom*+2), giant bag containing eight throwing rocks, 13,200 gp, some berries and mouldy bread, a stone plate and bowl, a set of divining stones, two sticks of incense and some lumps of iron ore.

Tawunn is a twisted being, always scheming and on the defensive against any creature it interacts with, including the Player Characters. He suspects everybody and their motives, which shows in his careful, distant approach to deals and negotiations.

Chapter Six: The Queen of Dwerzard

DAEN'SYN OF UNH ANEGHRS

Male Drow Elf 7th Level Fighter/5th Level Wizard

Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 7d10 +5d4 (55 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 16 (+5 Dex, +1 *bracers of armour*), touch 14, flat-footed 11

Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+10

Attack: Rapier +16 melee (1d6+4) or hand crossbow +15 ranged (1d4 plus poison)

Full Attack: Rapier +16/+11 melee (1d6+4/15–20) or hand crossbow +15 ranged (1d4/19–20 plus poison)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison, spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: Darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, spell resistance 22, summon familiar

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +6 (+8 vs. spells and spell-like abilities)

Alignment: Neutral evil

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +6, Craft (weaponsmithing)+13, Concentration +15 (+19 when casting defensively), Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +10, Jump +6, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Ride +17, Spellcraft +10.

Feats: Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Craft Magic Arms and Armour, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Trip, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (rapier).

CR: 13

Poison (Ex): Fortitude save (DC 13), initial damage unconsciousness, secondary damage unconsciousness for 2d4 hours.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire*. Caster level 12th.

Spells Prepared (4/5/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0th—*acid splash, detect magic, mage hand, resistance*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, mage armour, magic weapon, true strike*; 2nd—*acid arrow, cat's grace, endurance*; 3rd—*fireball, fly*. Save DCs are Intelligence-based.

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*alarm, expeditious retreat, hold portal, jump, mage armour, magic weapon, true strike*; 2nd—*acid arrow, cat's grace, endurance, web*; 3rd—*fireball, fly*.

Possessions: Elite drow blade (treat as +1 rapier), Drow mageslave bracers (treat as *bracers of armour* +1), masterwork hand crossbow, noble's outfit, case with 10 poisoned crossbow bolts, 400 gp.

The Unh Aneghr ambassador in Ogginnogg is a cruel man, who enjoys mind games and torturing others without laying a finger on them. If given the chance, he tries to play with the emotions and feelings of anyone he interacts with, particularly the hapless gnomes under his jurisdiction.

MATRON K'LBANA OF HOUSE UNH ANEGHR**Female Drow Elf 11th Level Cleric****Medium Humanoid**

Hit Dice: 11d8+33 (86 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 20 (+5 +2 *mithral chain shirt*, +4 +2 *large steel shield*), touch 10, flat-footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+10

Attack: +2 *morningstar* +12 melee (1d8+4) or +1 *hand crossbow* +9 ranged (1d4+1)

Full Attack: +2 *morningstar* +12/+7 melee (1d8+4) or +1 *hand crossbow* +9 ranged (1d4+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison, rebuke undead 6/day, spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: Darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, spell resistance 22

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +12

Alignment: Neutral evil

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 20, Cha 16

Skills: Concentration +17, Craft (poison) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Spellcraft +8.

Feats: Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative.

CR: 12

Spells Prepared (6/7+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, guidance, inflict minor wounds, light, resistance* (2); 1st—*bane* (2), *bless, divine favour* (2), *entropic shield, protection from good**, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*death knell**, hold person (2), silence (3); 3rd—*bestow curse* (2), *dispel magic* (2), *magic circle against good**, *prayer*; 4th—*divine power, poison* (3), *unholy blight**; 5th—*dispel good**, *righteous might, slay living* (2); 6th—*create undead**, *mass bear's endurance*. Save DCs are Wisdom-based.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (touch kills one creature with 11d6 hit points or less, 1/day), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Sacred drow mace (treat as +2 *morningstar*), sacred drow bow (treat as +1 *hand crossbow*), sacred drow mail (treat as +2 *mithral chain shirt*), sacred drow shield (treat as +2 *large steel shield*), case with 10 crossbow bolts coated in deathblade poison (Fort DC 20, initial damage 1d6 Con/ secondary damage 2d6 Con), Spider-Goddess amulet (*peripat of wisdom* +2), a flask of purple-grey

oil (*oil of keen edge*), 1 dose of deathblade poison, scroll of *greater dispel magic*, scroll of *heal*, diamond earrings (1,000 gp each).

K'lbanda is a calculating and manipulative woman, all wiles and no scruples. She is a domineering temptress, accustomed to the servile reverence of male and female drow alike. When dealing with the Player Characters, she always acts like she is in control of the situation, no matter how bad things are going. If defeated in combat, she makes her best effort to die in the arms of her killer.

P'TOECH

Male Drow Elf 8th Level Fighter/4th Level Sorcerer Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 8d10+4d4 (54 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 15 (+3 Dex, +2 *bracers of armour*), touch 13, flat-footed 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+13

Attack: Longsword +15 melee (1d8+4/17–20) or hand crossbow +13 ranged (1d4/19–20 plus poison)

Full Attack: Longsword +15/+10 melee (1d8+4/17–20) or hand crossbow +13 ranged (1d4/19–20 plus poison)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison, spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: Darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, spell resistance 22, summon familiar

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +8 (+10 vs. spells and spell-like abilities)

Alignment: Neutral evil

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 16

Skills: Bluff +12, Concentration +7 (+11 casting defensively), Diplomacy +5, Disguise +3 (+5 when acting in character), Intimidate +17, Listen +2, Sense Motive, Spot +2.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (illusion), Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive, Spell Focus (illusion), Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialisation (longsword).

CR: 13

Poison (Ex): Fort save (DC 13), initial damage unconsciousness, secondary damage unconsciousness for 2d4 hours.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*. Caster level 12th.

Spells Prepared (6/7/4; base DC = 15 + spell level for illusion spells, DC = 13 + spell level for all other spells): 0th—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *resistance*; 1st—*mage armour*, *magic missile*, *shield*; 2nd—*invisibility*. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Possessions: Elite drow blade (treat as +1 longsword), mageslave drow bracers (treat as *bracers of armour* +2), masterwork hand crossbow, courtier's outfit, case with 10 poisoned crossbow bolts, 190 gp.

Captain P'toech of the Ogginnogg Drow Guard is a brutal, ruthless man, who enjoys subtly bullying and torturing the deep gnomes under his rule. He is, however, a coward at heart; when a situation turns against him, he will not hesitate to run in the opposite direction.

TAEORBAI

Female Half-Black Dragon 14th Level Elf Sorcerer Medium Dragon (water)

Hit Dice: 14d4+45 (80hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 18 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +3 bracers), touch 11, flat-footed 17

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+10

Attack: Claw +12 melee (1d4+5) or bite +12 melee (1d6+3) or longsword +11 melee (1d8+3)

Full Attack: 2 claws +12 melee (1d4+5) and bite +7 melee (1d6+3) or longsword +11/+6 melee (1d8+3/19–20) and claw +7 melee (1d4+5) and bite +7 melee (1d6+3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, spells

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., elf traits, immunity to acid, *sleep* and paralysis effects, low-light vision, *sCRY* on Akata

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +9

Alignment: Neutral evil

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 24

Skills: Bluff +32, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Listen +4, Search +3, Spellcraft +9, Speak Language 2 (dwarven, uncommon), Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness^B, Persuasive, Silent Spell, Skill Focus (Bluff), Still Spell, Toughness.

CR: 16

Breath Weapon (Su): 60 ft. line of acid, 6d8 acid damage, Reflex DC 13 halves

Spells Known (6/8/8/8/7/7/6/4; base DC = 17 + spell level): 0th—*acid splash, detect magic, light, mage hand, message, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*comprehend languages, disguise self, magic missile, shield, true strike*; 2nd—*acid arrow, bear's endurance, eagle's splendour, false life, mirror image*; 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, hold person, slow*; 4th—*black tentacles, greater invisibility, stonework, wall of ice*; 5th—*cloudkill, dominate person, telekinesis*; 6th—*freezing sphere, shadow walk*; 7th—*simulacrum*.

Possessions: masterwork longsword, dragonscale necklace (*amulet of mighty fists* +2), black silk cloak (*cloak of charisma* +4), bracelets of black gold (*bracers of armour* +3), *potion of cure light wounds*, three *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of protection from arrows* (10/magic), *oil of magic vestment* +5, three *potions of cure serious wounds*, scroll of *lesser globe of invulnerability*, two scrolls of *dispel magic*.

Akata (familiar), Viper Snake: CR 7; Tiny animal; HD 14d8; hp 40; Init +7; Spd 15 ft. (3 squares), climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 22 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +7 natural); Atk +10/+5 melee (1 plus poison, bite); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1 plus poison, bite); Space/Reach 2½ ft./0 ft.; SA poison; SQ deliver touch spells, empathic link, evasion, scent, share spells, speak with Taemorai, speak with vipers, spell resistance 19; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Bluff +13, Climb +11, Hide +15, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Listen +6, Speak Language (dwarven, uncommon), Spellcraft +9, Spot +6, Swim +5; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse^B.

The Queen of Dwegard fights like what she is – a fickle, playful girl for whom everything is a game.

She mocks her opponents and flaunts her own skills, never admitting defeat even if forced to flee.



WEBWIND

Male black dragon (mature)

Huge Dragon (Water)

Hit Dice: 24d12+144 (300 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 60 ft. (10 squares) fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.

Armour Class: 29 (–2 size, +21 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 29

Base Attack/Grapple: +23/+39

Attack: Bite +29 melee (2d8+8)

Full Attack: Bite +29 melee (2d8+8) and 2 claws +27 melee (2d6+4) and 2 wings +27 melee (1d8+4) and tail slap +27 melee (2d6+12)

Space/Reach: 15 ft./ 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, crush 2d8+12, spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: blindsense 60 ft., DR 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to acid, sleep and paralysis, spell resistance 21, water breathing

Saves: Fort +20, Ref +14, Will +16

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Abilities: Str 27, Dex 10, Con 22, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

Skills: Concentration +33 (37 casting defensively), Hide +27, Listen +31, Move Silently +27, Search +29, Sense Motive +29, Spot +31, Swim +35.

Feats: Ability Focus (breath weapon), Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Wingover.

CR: 14

Breath Weapon (Su): 100 ft. line of acid, 14d4 acid damage, Reflex DC 30 halves.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 210 feet, creatures with 23 or fewer HD become panicked, Will save DC 24 negatives.

Crush (Ex): Affects all creatures in a 15 ft. by 15 ft. area, 2d8+12 damage, grapple bonus +39, Ref save DC 28.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—darkness; 1/day—corrupt water. Caster Level 7th.

Spells Known (6/7/5; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th—acid splash, detect poison, detect magic, mage hand, read magic, resistance; 1st—endure elements, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, sleep; 2nd—acid arrow, fog cloud. Caster Level 5th. Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Unless he is heavily outfought, Webwind maintains a jaded, mildly sneering fighting style, treating combat as a minor nuisance at best. If his opposition proves to be more than a match for him, he takes things seriously and retaliates with all his strength; otherwise, he is likely to even disdain use of his breath weapon, fighting as indolently as his enemy allows.

Chapter Seven: The Curse of Archaneroth

ABBAZEL, THE MACE OF RUIN

Advanced Nalfeshnee (20 Hit Dice)

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil)

Hit Dice: 20d8 +180 (270 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares) fly 40 ft. (poor)

Armour Class: 27 (–2 size, +1 Dex, +18 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 26

Base Attack/Grapple: +21/ +36

Attack: *Mace of Ruin* +31 melee (4d6+15) or bite +28 melee (2d8+8)

Full Attack: *Mace of Ruin* +31/+26/+21/+16 melee (4d6+15) and bite +23 melee (2d8+8)

Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: *Mace of ruin*, smite, spell-like abilities, *summon demon*

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 22, telepathy 100 ft., true seeing

Saves: Fort +21, Ref +13, Will +18

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 13, Con 28, Int 22, Wis 22, Cha 20

Skills: Bluff +28, Concentration +32, Diplomacy +32, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Hide +22, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Listen +37, Move Silently +24, Search +29, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +31 (+33 with scrolls), Spot +31, Survival +12 (+14 following tracks), Use Magic Device +28 (+30 with scrolls).

Feats: Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (mace).

CR: 18

Possessions: *Mace of ruin* (see text).

Abbazel's natural weapons, as well as his *mace of ruin*, count as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Abbazel is a nalfeshnee demon from the lower planes; he was the one in charge of leading the chaos army that destroyed the city of Archaneroth. When he ultimately fell in battle, his soul was bound to a stone pillar in the city plaza so he could watch over Archaneroth for all eternity. If the Travelling Seal is broken, Abbazel shall be freed from his stone prison and wreak havoc upon the city again. Abbazel is also freed if *mage's disjunction* or *antimagic field* is cast upon his prison (O6).

Abbazel attacks angrily, reacting against the city and all living things inside it as a disgusting vermin's nest to be laid to waste immediately. When facing opponents worthy of better attention, he prefers to disable them with his smite ability before attacking.

Smite (Su): Three times per day, Abbazel can create a nimbus of unholy light. When he triggers this ability, rainbow-coloured beams play around his body for one round, after which they burst in a 60 foot radius. Any creature within this area must succeed on a DC 25 Will save or be dazed for 1d10 rounds as visions of its worst fears hound it. A dazed creature cannot act, yet it receives its full Dexterity and shield bonuses to Armour Class if attacked. Other demons are immune to this effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*call lightning* (DC 18), *feeblemind* (DC 20), *greater dispel magic*, *slow* (DC 18), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *unholy aura* (DC 23). Caster level 12th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Summon Demon (Sp): Twice per day, Abbazel can attempt to summon 1d4 vrock, 1d4 hezrou, or one glabrezu with a 50% chance of success, or another nalfeshnee with a 20% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 5th level spell.

True Seeing (Su): Abbazel has a true seeing ability, as the spell at caster level 14th, except that it works continuously.

THE MACE OF RUIN

This weapon, given to Abbazel so he would wield it to destroy Archanerorth, is actually an evil artefact from the lower planes. It has the abilities of a Huge +3 *unholy morningstar* of *mighty cleaving*, plus it always deals critical hit damage (4d6+3 on any successful hit) even against objects or creatures that are not subject to critical hits. This damage is not increased further if the mace's wielder scores an actual critical hit. Damage from the mace of ruin bypasses any and all kinds of object hardness or damage reduction.

AMAROS THE DRAGON LORD

Male Dragontouched Human Lich 17th Level Cleric

Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid)

Hit Dice: 18d12+6 (123 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 31 (+3 Dex, +8 *bracers of armour*, +5 *ring of protection*, +5 natural), touch 18, flat-footed 28

Base Attack/Grapple: +12/+17

Attack: Dragon sceptre +14 melee (1d8+2) or touch +13 melee (1d8+5 negative energy plus paralysis)

Full Attack: Dragon sceptre +14/+9/+4 melee (1d8+2) and touch +8 melee (1d8+5 negative energy plus paralysis)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Fear aura, rebuke undead 7/day (+2 bonus on check)

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/bludgeoning and magic, immune to cold, electrical, mind-affecting and polymorph effects, +4 turn resistance.

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +19

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 16, Con —, Int 18, Wis 26, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +6, Concentration +22 (+26 when casting defensively), Hide +8, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (religion) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +22, Listen +18, Move silently +8, Search +12, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +24, Spot +18, Survival +8 (+10 in other planes).

Feats: Ability Focus (paralysing touch), Combat Casting, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Quicken Spell, Toughness (2).

CR: 20

The save DC against Amaros' damaging touch attack is 23.

Fear aura (Su): Creatures with 5 HD or less that come within 60 feet of Amaros must succeed on a Will save (DC 23) or be affected as per a *fear* spell at Caster Level 18.

Paralysing Touch (Su): Target is permanently rendered immobile, Will save (DC 25) negates.

Spells Prepared (6/7+1/7+1/7+1/7+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1; base DC = 18 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic*, *guidance* (2), *resistance* (3); 1st—*bane* (2), *divine favour* (2), *doom* (3), *protection from good**; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *desecrate**, *enthral*, *hold person* (3), *silence* (2); 3rd—*bestow curse* (2), *dispel magic* (3), *magic circle against good**, *prayer*, *protection from energy*; 4th—*divine power* (3), *poison* (3), *spell immunity*, *unholy blight**; 5th—*divine favour* (quicken) (2), *flame strike*, *insect plague*, *slay living**, *unhallow*; 6th—*create undead**, *greater dispel magic*, *harm*, *hold person* (quicken) (3); 7th—*blasphemy*, *destruction**, *dispel magic* (quicken) (3), *prayer* (quicken) (2); 8th—*fire storm*, *greater spell immunity*, *divine power* (quicken) (3), *unholy aura**; 9th—*energy drain*, *wail of the banshee**.

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day; slay one creature with 17d6 hp or less), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Dragon sceptre (treat as +1 *morningstar*), jewelled bracers (*bracers of armour* +8), golden bracelet of Ka (treat as *ring of protection* +5), twin silvered mercury armlets (treat as *gloves of dexterity* +6), dragon headdress (treat as *periapt of wisdom* +6).

Amaros, the most gifted of Archanerorth lords, managed to gain his people's religious worship by making them believe he was an avatar of the Dragon Lord of Death, the main deity of the Athan pantheon. After a lifetime of tyranny and power, Amaros planned and staged his own death, just before the gods came to devastate his city. He would spend the millennia of Archanerorth's curse as a slumbering lich, until someone with enough ambition and resources found his tomb and freed him, at which point he would walk the world again and wreak his revenge on the gods themselves. During his thousands of years of sleep, Amaros has dreamed himself a god, actually believing he assumed the mantle of the deity he impersonated for so long. He has good reasons for

this. The faith of the Dragon Lord praises undeath and seeks to defeat the powers of the universe; by surviving the curse of the gods and becoming such a powerful undead avatar while worshipping the forces of Death he himself represents, Amaros has become his own object of worship – the embodiment of all his goals and his faith.

The Dragon Lord's Phylactery

When Amaros became a Lich, he stored his soul on the three magical words *Gah Sin Mahl*, which he inscribed on three pieces of parchment. These three scrolls are Amaros' phylactery, containing his life force and the only key to open his cursed tomb. Just before going to his long sleep, the Dragon Lord distributed the scrolls among his three most trusted slaves, who would out-sleep his curse with him. When the moment of his awakening was near, Amaros' slaves would wake as well and say each of the words aloud, which would blast open the doors of his mausoleum and allow him to walk the land of the living again. Whether this scheme succeeds or not is entirely up to the Player Characters.

AOGARN

Male Dragontouched 19th Level Human Wizard Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 19d4+19+3 (64 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 30 ft.

Armour Class: 22 (+1 Dex, +2 *amulet of natural armour*; +5 *bracers of armour*; +4 *ring of protection*), touch 15, flat-footed 21

Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+9

Attack: +1 *quarterstaff* +10 melee (1d6+1) or dagger +10 melee (1d4)

Full Attack: +1 *quarterstaff* +10/+5 melee (1d6+1) or dagger +10/+5 melee (1d4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Dragontouched traits, low-light vision, permanent spells (see text), *scry* on familiar

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +19

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 30, Wis 15, Cha 14

Skills: Appraise +7(+9 with alchemical items), Bluff +4, Concentration +22 (+26 when casting defensively), Craft (alchemy) +31, Decipher script +31, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (arcana) +35, Knowledge (history) +31, Listen +11, Speak Language (Athan Secret Tongue), Spellcraft +33 (+35 with scrolls), Spot +11

Feats: Alertness^B, Athan Secret Tongue, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Forge Ring, Improved Familiar, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Mastery (*globe of invulnerability*, *greater dispel magic*, *spell turning*, *telekinesis*, *vision*), Toughness
CR: 20

Permanent Spells: Aogarn has cast the following permanent spells on himself: *arcane sight*, *detect magic*, *read magic* and *resistance*. In addition, he has cast a permanent *telepathic bond* between him and Blackblade (see page 123). He also has a *contingency* prepared to cast *globe of invulnerability* on him as soon as he is the target of a 4th level or lower spell. It bears noting he has *wished* his Strength and Intelligence increased.

Spells Prepared (4/6/6/6/6/5/5/5/4/3; base DC = 18 + spell level): 0th—*mage hand* (2), *prestidigitation* (2); 1st—*identify*, *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *shield* (2), *true strike*; 2nd—*acid arrow*, *fox's cunning* (2), *invisibility* (2), *protection from arrows*; 3rd—*dispel magic* (6); 4th—*resilient sphere* (2), *screaming* (2), *stoneskin* (2); 5th—*break enchantment*, *mage armour* (quicken), *shield* (quicken), *telekinesis* (2); 6th—*globe of invulnerability*, *greater dispel magic* (2), *mass suggestion* (2); 7th—*control undead*, *mass hold person* (2), *spell turning*, *vision*; 8th—*maze*, *polymorph any object*, *prismatic wall*, *stoneskin* (quicken); 9th—*foresight*, *mage's disjunction*, *time stop*.

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*burning hands*, *cause fear*, *hypnotism*, *identify*, *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *true strike*; 2nd—*acid arrow*, *continual flame*, *fox's cunning*, *invisibility*, *protection from arrows*; 3rd—*arcane sight*, *dispel magic*, *explosive runes*, *secret page*; 4th—*fire trap*, *resilient sphere*, *screaming*, *stoneskin*; 5th—*break enchantment*, *passwall*, *permanency*, *telekinesis*, *telepathic bond*; 6th—*contingency*, *globe of invulnerability*, *greater dispel magic*, *mass suggestion*; 7th—*control undead*, *mass hold person*, *spell turning*, *vision*; 8th—*maze*, *polymorph any object*, *prismatic wall*, *telekinetic sphere*; 9th—*foresight*, *imprisonment*, *mage's disjunction*, *time stop*, *wish*.

Possessions: Dark ash staff (treat as +1 *quarterstaff*), masterwork dagger, boar torc (treat as *amulet of natural armour* +2), jewelled bracelets (treat as *bracers of armour* +5), demon-shaped silver ring (treat as *ring of protection* +4), dragon torc (treat as

headband of intellect +6), 3 scrolls of *passwall*, *bag of holding* (type I), *crystal ball with telepathy*, writing quill, ink, 52 pieces of parchment, *ring of sustenance*, two *everburning torches*, spell components, spellbook (protected by *explosive runes*), the dragon stone (protected by *secret page*).

Obsidian (familiar), Wyrmling Black Dragon:

CR 10; Tiny dragon; HD 19d12+19; hp 32; Init +4; Spd 60 ft., fly 100 ft. (average), swim 60 ft.; AC 25 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +11 melee (1d4, bite)/ Full Atk +11 melee (1d4, bite) and +6 melee (1d3, 2 claws); SA breath weapon; SQ darkvision 60 ft., deliver touch spells, empathic link, immunity to acid, *sleep* and paralysis effects, improved evasion, shared spells, speak with Aogarn, spell resistance 24, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +22, Craft (alchemy) +23, Decipher script +23, Escape Artist +7, Hide +15, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (history) +23, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Speak Language (Athan Secret Tongue), Spellcraft +25(+27 with scrolls), Spot +7; Improved Initiative, Wingover.

Aogarn is always on edge and his demeanour is always aggressive, as if he is just fed up with everybody and everything. He reacts the same way whether approached peacefully or violently, trying to get rid of interlopers as soon as possible so he can continue with what he is doing.

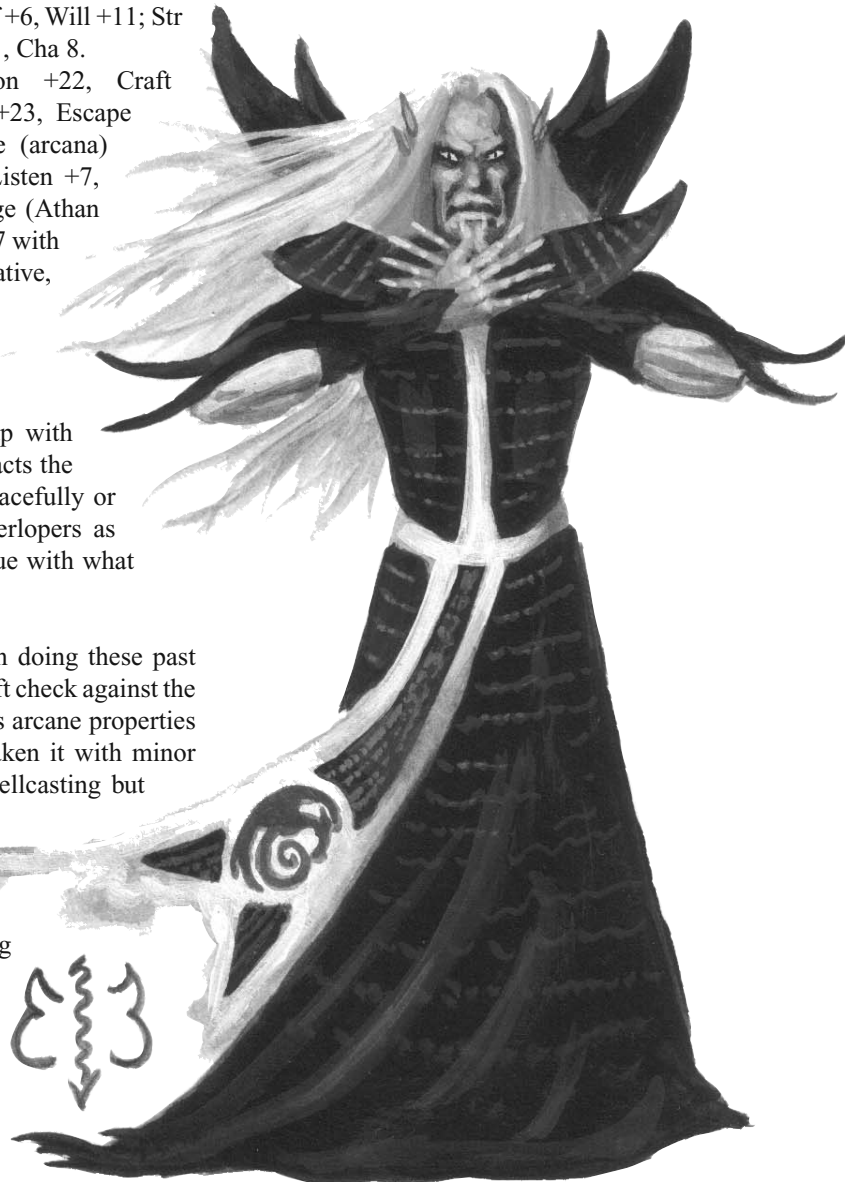
Essentially, what Aogarn has been doing these past few days is to take 20 on a Spellcraft check against the Travelling Seal, so as to discern its arcane properties and discover the best way to weaken it with minor rituals that do not involve any spellcasting but simply an advanced understanding of magic. The surprise here is that he is succeeding – unless the Player Characters stop him in time, he shall destroy the Travelling Seal – and himself with it – in less than a day.

Tactics

Aogarn usually activates Combat Expertise at the maximum allowed bonus and always cast his

spells defensively, confident in his high concentration bonus. He opens with a *time stop* spell, during which he attempts to cast *prismatic wall* and *spell turning*, casting also *shield* and *stoneskin* if time allows. If needed, he casts a quickened *stoneskin* as soon as the spell expires. If he is caught anywhere but in front of the Travelling Seal (H26), he also tries to run away during the *time stop*, unless his opposition seems weak enough to defeat by himself.

Once engaged in combat, Aogarn prefers disabling spells such as *resilient sphere*, *mass hold person* and *maze*.



ASPIM, THE SECOND SLAVE**Human Vampire 7th Level Monk/8th Level Sorcerer****Medium Undead (augmented humanoid)****Hit Dice:** 15d12 (97 hp)**Initiative:** +10**Speed:** 50 ft. (10 squares)**Armour Class:** 32 (+6 Dex, +6 natural, +4 monk bonus, +3 *bracers of armour*, +2 *defending quarterstaff*, +1 Two-Weapon Defence, +1 *ring of protection*), touch 23, flat-footed 23**Base Attack/Grapple:** +9/+18**Attack:** Slam +16 melee (1d6+7 plus energy drain), unarmed +16 melee (1d8+7) or quarterstaff +14 melee (1d6+7)**Full Attack:** Flurry of blows +15/+15/+10 melee (1d8+7) and slam +10 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain) or flurry of blows +13/+13/+8 melee (1d8+7) and quarterstaff +11 melee (1d6+5) and quarterstaff +11/+6 melee (1d6+2) and slam +8 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain)**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. /5 ft.**Special Attacks:** Blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate, energy drain, *ki* strike, spells**Special Qualities:** Alternate form, damage reduction 10/magic and silver, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, purity of body, resistance to cold 10 and electrical 10, slow fall 30 ft., spider climb, still mind, +4 turn resistance, undead traits, wholeness of body (14 points)**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +13, Will +14(+16 vs. enchantment)**Alignment:** Lawful evil**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 22, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 19.**Skills:** Balance +8, Bluff +23, Concentration +15 (+19 when casting defensively), Craft (musical instruments) +12, Diplomacy +6, Hide +24, Intimidate +6, Jump +7, Listen +21, Move silently +24, Perform (string instruments) +14, Search +10, Sense motive +12, Spellcraft +4, Spot +21, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks), Tumble +16.**Feats:** Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Grapple^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Unarmed Strike^B, Mobility, Two-Weapon Defence, Two-Weapon Fighting.**CR:** 17

Aspim's slam and unarmed attacks are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Children of the Night (Su): Once per day, Aspim may summon a pack of 11-20 fiendish dire rats as a standard action; the rats arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve Aspim for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su): Aspim may attempt to dominate a target within 30 feet; he must spend a standard action and look into the target's eyes; the target must then succeed on a Will save (DC 21, Charisma-based) or fall instantly under Aspim's influence as though by a dominate person spell at caster level 12.

Fast Healing (Ex): If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, Aspim must reach his coffin at **Area O16** before 2 hours or be utterly destroyed.

Spells Known (6/7/7/6/4; base DC = 14 + spell level):
0th—*dancing lights, daze, flare, mage hand, mending, message, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, mage armour, ray of enfeeblement, shield, true strike*; 2nd—*blur, cat's grace, mirror image*; 3rd—*blink, slow*; 4th—*greater invisibility*.

Possessions: Black iron staff (+2 *defending quarterstaff*), black leather armlets (*gloves of dexterity* +2), black leather bracers (*bracers of armour* +3), black leather knuckles (treat as *ring of protection* +1), black silk sash (treat as *amulet of mighty fists* +2).

Aspim is the most flamboyant of the Three Slaves, a veritable spectacle whether he is fighting or performing – he often does both – though not any less deadly because of it. He was always a very disciplined man, both on the stage and the fight, and the only man the Dragon Lord would ever call his equal.

BLACKBLADE**Male Half-Silver Dragon, Human 6th Level Paladin/1st Level Rogue/10th Level Blackguard Medium Humanoid****Hit Dice:** 16d10+80 (168 hp)**Initiative:** +6**Speed:** 20 ft. in full plate**Armour Class:** 36 (+2 Dex, +11 +3 *dragonhide plate*, +6 +4 *heavy steel shield*, +4 natural, +3 *ring of protection*), touch 15, flat-footed 34**Base Attack/Grapple:** +16/+24**Attack:** +3 *unholy greatsword* +27 melee (2d6+15/ crit. 17-20) or claw +24 melee (1d4+8)**Full Attack:** +3 *unholy greatsword* +27/+22/+17/+12 melee (2d6+15/ crit. 17-20) and bite +19 melee (1d6+4); or 2 claws +24 melee (1d4+8) and bite +19 melee (1d6+4)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Aura of despair, breath weapon, poison use, rebuke undead 6/day, smite good 5/day, sneak attack +5d6

Special Qualities: dark blessing, darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*, immunity to cold, *sleep* effects and paralysis, lay on hands (30 points), trapfinding

Saves: Fort +23, Ref +14, Will +15

Alignment: Neutral evil

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +8, Concentration +24, Hide +11, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (religion) +20, Move Silently -4, Ride +11, Sense Motive +12.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Expertise, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack.

CR: 19



Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot cone, damage 6d8 cold, Reflex DC 15 halves.

Smite Good (Su): 5/day, +3 bonus to attack roll, +10 bonus to damage.

Spells Prepared (3/3/3/1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 1st—*corrupt weapon*, *doom* (2); 2nd—*bull's strength* (2), *shatter*; 3rd—*contagion* (3); 4th—*poison*.

Possessions: Dark rune-carved sword with a dragon's head pommel (+3 *unholy greatsword*), full plate armour made of black and silver dragon scales (+3 *dragonhide plate*), heavy steel shield of the same material (+4 *heavy steel shield*), golden ring with a single opal (*ring of protection* +3), darkwood bow (+1 *mighty composite longbow*), big flowing black cloak (*cloak of resistance* +2), scroll case with two scrolls of *passwall*, 3 *everburning torches*, 20 days of trail rations, *figurine of wondrous power* (*obsidian steed*).

Blackblade was the offshoot of a noble silver dragon and a beautiful priestess of the moon, far to the south of the Moru Country. As he grew up, surrounded by trappings of holiness and sanctity, he slowly got tired of rituals and ceremonies. He realised mortals and their civilisation were completely tied to rites and self-important practices for everything, from building houses and marrying to killing each other in the name of this or that faith. There even was a ritualistic feel to the way everybody treated him, even though (or maybe because) they knew and feared him as the monster he was. After he fought his first war against enemies of his church, a shining silvered champion of righteousness spewing dragon breath on the ranks of strangers for no other reason than it being expected of him, he came to despise himself, the whole ritual of war and the ridiculousness of his role as the inhuman champion of his people. Soon, what he called the whole 'charade of good' became too much to bear and he turned on it all, becoming a mockery of his absurd times and deciding to reflect their senseless ritual violence by becoming a ruthless mercenary. Thus he forsook his paladinhood and his status in his mother's church, became an adventuring rogue and took the name 'Blackblade' as a personal joke about himself and his path in life. Eventually, Blackblade's travels led him to the Moru Country, a desolate and barren land that suited his soul perfectly. There, he made contact with the church of the Old Dragon, those who worshipped no god but the origin of death itself. Here, he thought, was a faith worth following,

for it was no faith and it spat on all beliefs. He *did* contact the Old Dragon through a dream, after which he began training as a blackguard – a true champion of death and destruction, with no goal but the complete obliteration of every inch of human civilisation that stood in his way. When Aogarn found him, he was already a famous and feared mercenary, who killed for money in the name of his heartless Dragon God.

CHAMERI, THE STEWARD OF ARCHANEBOTH
Half-Fiend Vampire Human 11th Level Wizard/1st Level Fighter

Medium Undead (augmented outsider)

Hit Dice: 12d12 (78 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average)

Armour Class: 25 (+2 Dex, +6 natural, +7 *bracers of armour*), touch 12, flat-footed 23

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+12

Attack: Slam +12 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain)

Full Attack: Rapier +15/+10 melee (1d6+9/15-20) and slam +10 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain) and bite +10 melee (1d6+3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. /5 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate, energy drain, *smite good*, spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: Alternate form, damage reduction 10/magic and silver, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, gaseous form, immunity to poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electrical 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 22, spider climb, +4 turn resistance, undead traits

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +10

Alignment: Lawful evil

Abilities: Str 23, Dex 14, Con —, Int 21, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +13, Climb +10, Concentration +12 (+16 when casting defensively), Decipher Script +16, Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +7, Hide +10, Intimidate +9, Jump +10, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (local) +16, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Listen +13, Move silently +10, Ride +6, Search +13, Sense motive +11, Spellcraft +16, Spot +13, Swim +10.

Feats: Ability Focus (*blasphemy*), Ability Focus (dominate), Ability Focus (*poison*), Alertness, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Persuasive, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell.

CR: 17

Chameri's natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Children of the Night (Su): Once per day, Chameri may summon a pack of 11-20 fiendish dire rats as a standard action; the rats arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve Chameri for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su): Chameri may attempt to dominate a target within 30 feet; Chameri must spend a standard action and look into the target's eyes; the target must then succeed on a Will save (DC 21, Charisma-based) or fall instantly under Chameri's influence as though by a dominate person spell at caster level 12.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Chameri can make a normal melee attack against a good-aligned target, with a +3 bonus to the attack roll. If the attack succeeds, it deals extra an additional +12 damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*darkness*, *poison* (DC 20); 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 23), *contagion* (DC 17), *desecrate* (DC 16), *unholy blight* (DC 18). Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Alternate Form (Su): Chameri can assume the shape of a bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf as a standard action; this works like a *polymorph* spell cast by a 12th level character, except Chameri does not regain hit points for changing form and must choose from among the forms mentioned here. While in his alternate form, Chameri loses his normal attack routines and his dominate ability, but he gains the natural weapons and extraordinary special attacks of its new form. He can remain in that form until he assumes another or until the next sunrise.

Fast Healing (Ex): If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, Chameri must reach any unoccupied coffin within **Area O** before 2 hours or be utterly destroyed.

Spells Memorised (4/6/5/5/4/3/1; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic*, *message*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st—*expeditious retreat* (x2), *magic missile* (x3), *shield*; 2nd—*acid arrow* (x2), *magic missile* (silent) (x2), *see invisibility*; 3rd—*dispel magic* (x2), *fireball* (x2), *vampiric touch*; 4th—*dispel magic* (silent), *fire shield*, *stoneskin*, *wall of fire*; 5th—*cloudkill*, *mage's faithful hound*, *mind fog*; 6th—*transformation*.

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*alarm, cause fear, comprehend languages, disguise self, expeditious retreat, feather fall, identify, magic missile, shield, sleep*; 2nd—*acid arrow, blindness/deafness, invisibility, knock, levitate, see invisibility, touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, fireball, keen edge, greater magic weapon, vampiric touch*; 4th—*fire shield, fire trap, globe of invulnerability, stonesskin, wall of fire*; 5th—*cloudkill, mage's faithful hound, mind fog, permanency*; 6th—*repulsion, transformation*.

Possessions: Purest white steel rapier (+3 *keen rapier*), silk and cloth-of-gold bracelets (*bracers of armour* +7).

Chameri has a suave, polite manner; his evil heart does not detract from his good breeding and his sworn duty to protect Archanerth against any disruption or invasion. If the Player Characters save him, he recognises them as a potential ally and offers a temporary truce to get rid of Aogarn. If attacked, his combat style is as elegant and refined as his mannerisms, maintaining a defensive posture until he has gauged the enemy's strengths and weaknesses.

JELDANARA, THE FIRST SLAVE

Human vampire 11th level Wizard / 5th level Rogue

Medium Undead (augmented humanoid)

Hit Dice: 16d12 (104 hp)

Initiative: +8

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armour Class: 28 (+4 Dex, +6 natural, +2 *ring of protection*, +6 *bracers of armour*), touch 16, flat-footed 24

Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+10

Attack: Slam +10 melee (1d6+2 plus energy drain) or Quill +13 melee (1d4+3)

Full Attack: Quill +13/+8 melee (1d4+3) and slam +10 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain) and bite +10 melee (1d6+3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. /5 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate, energy drain, sneak attack +3d6, spells

Special Qualities: Alternate form, damage reduction 10/magic and silver, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, resistance to cold 10 and electrical 10, spider climb, trap finding, trap sense +1, +4 turn resistance, undead traits

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +11

Alignment: Lawful evil

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 18, Con —, Int 24, Wis 16, Cha 22.

Skills: Appraise +7 (+9 with sculptures), Bluff +26, Concentration +21 (+25 when casting defensively), Craft (sculpture) +19, Decipher Script +22, Diplomacy +22, Hide +12, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (architecture) +22, Knowledge (history) +19, Listen +11, Move silently +12, Search +15, Sense motive +23, Spellcraft +24 (+26 with scrolls and texts), Spot +11.

Feats: Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse.

CR: 18

Jeldanara's natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Children of the Night (Su): Once per day, Jeldanara may summon a pack of 11-20 fiendish dire rats as a standard action; the rats arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve Jeldanara for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su): Jeldanara may attempt to dominate a target within 30 feet; she must spend a standard action and look into the target's eyes; the target must then succeed on a Will save (DC 24, Charisma-based) or fall instantly under Jeldanara's influence as though by a dominate person spell at caster level 12.

Fast Healing (Ex): If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, Jeldanara must reach her coffin at **Area O17** before 2 hours or be utterly destroyed.

Spells Memorised (4/6/6/5/4/3/2; base DC = 19 + spell level for enchantment spells, DC = 17 + spell level for all other spells): 0th—*daze, mage hand, message, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*disguise self, mage armour, magic missile, obscuring mist, shield, true strike*; 2nd—*daze monster, hideous laughter, eagle's splendour (2), fox's cunning, invisibility*; 3rd—*deep slumber, dispel magic, hold person, slow, suggestion*; 4th—*confusion, crushing despair, lesser geas, stonesskin*; 5th—*hold monster, mind fog, telekinesis*; 6th—*geas/quest, mass suggestion*.

Spellbook: 0th—all spells; 1st—*charm person, disguise self, erase, hypnotism, mage armour, magic missile, obscuring mist, shield, sleep, true strike*; 2nd—*daze monster, hideous laughter, eagle's splendour, fox's cunning, invisibility, see invisibility, touch of*

idiocy; 3rd—*deep slumber, dispel magic, heroism, hold person, slow, suggestion*; 4th—*charm monster, confusion, crushing despair, lesser geas, stonesskin*; 5th—*feeblemind, hold monster, mind fog, telekinesis*; 6th—*geas/quest, mass suggestion*.

Possessions: Stiletto with the name ‘Quill’ inscribed on the blade (*dagger of venom*), gold and silver bracelets (*bracers of armour* +6), silvered ring with heart-shaped diamond (*ring of protection* +2), jewelled tiara (*headband of intellect* +4), white spidersilk gown (*cloak of charisma* +2).

Beautiful Jeldanara, the only love of the Dragon Lord, was turned into a vampire by the curse that bound her to the Dragon Lord, his lover and master, when he became an undead lord to escape the destruction of Archaneroth. She has slept for millennia as a vampire, waiting for someone to come and free her beloved from his tomb. Now Aogarn has arrived, she decided to let him trample her master’s halls, as he intends to break the Travelling Seal holding the Dragon Lord prisoner. When the Player Characters find Jeldanara, she is almost frantic with anticipation, hoping for Aogarn to succeed with such intensity as only an immortal may know. If she senses the Player Characters intend to thwart Aogarn, she attempts to stop them by any means, first by bluffing, then by pleading, then by using her Dominate ability. As a last resort, she is not above casting *geas* to force people to help break the Travelling Seal instead of protecting it.

N'TO'UCH, THE SECOND SLAVE

Human vampire 7th Level Cleric/8th Level Fighter Medium Undead (augmented humanoid)

Hit Dice: 15d12 (97 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 20 ft. in full plate (4 squares)

Armour Class: 30 (+1 Dex, +6 natural, +11 +3 *full plate*, +2 *ring of protection*), touch 13, flat-footed 29

Base Attack/Grapple: +13/+19

Attack: +3 *ghost touch greatsword* +23 melee (2d6+14/17-20) or slam +19 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain)

Full Attack: +3 *ghost touch greatsword* +23/+18/+13 melee (2d6+14/17-20) or slam +19 melee (1d6+6 plus energy drain)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. /5 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate, energy drain, rebuke undead 5/day, spells

Special Qualities: Alternate form, damage reduction

10/magic and silver, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, gaseous form, resistance to cold 10 and electrical 10, spider climb, +4 turn resistance, undead traits

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +12

Alignment: Lawful evil

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 15, Con —, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +16, Concentration +12 (+16 when casting defensively), Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +4, Hide +4, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +13, Move Silently +4, Search +11, Sense motive +15, Spot +13.

Feats: Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialisation (greatsword), Whirlwind Attack.

CR: 17

N'to'och's slam and unarmed attacks are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Children of the Night (Su): Once per day, N'to'och may summon a pack of 11-20 fiendish dire rats as a standard action; the rats arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve N'to'och for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su): N'to'och may attempt to dominate a target within 30 feet; he must spend a standard action and look into the target's eyes; the target must then succeed on a Will save (DC 19, Charisma-based) or fall instantly under N'to'och's influence as though by a dominate person spell at caster level 12.

Fast Healing (Ex): If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, N'to'och must reach his coffin at **Area O18** before 2 hours or be utterly destroyed.

Spells Prepared (6/6+1/4+1/3+1/2+1; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, guidance, mending, resistance* (2), *virtue*; 1st—*bane, cause fear**, *divine favour* (2), *doom* (2), *obscuring mist*; 2nd—*bull's strength, darkness, detect thoughts**, *silence* (2); 3rd—*animate dead**, *bestow curse* (2), *dispel magic*; 4th—*divination**, *divine power* (2).

*Domain spell.

Domains: Death (death touch 1/day, kills one creature with 7d6 hp or less), Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are class skills, cast divination spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: big broad black sword (+3 *ghost touch greatsword*), unwieldy black spiked plate armour (+3 *full plate armour*), black steel gauntlets (*gauntlets of ogre power*), golden ring with the letter 'N' (*ring of protection* +2), two potions of *heroism*, potion of *protection from arrows 15/magic*, two scrolls of *lesser planar ally*.

N'to'och was always the Dragon Lord's sideshow; his favourite yes-man, his personal plaything, the target of all of Amaras' mockery and frustration – and also his best friend. Of the Three Slaves, he was the only one that actually expected to become undead in the name of his comrade and master; now, he could not be happier with his undead gifts and crucial task – to ensure the successful return of the Dragon Lord.

RAVAHNASA SINGH

Male Rakshasa 7th level Sorcerer

Medium Outsider

Hit Dice: 7d8+7d4+42 (91 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armour Class: 23 (+2 Dex, +2 *ring of protection*, +9 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 21

Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+11

Attack: Greatsword +11 (2d6+1) or claw +11 melee (1d4+1) or bite +11 melee (1d6+1)

Full Attack: Greatsword +11/+6 (2d6+1) or 2 claws +11 melee (1d4+1) and bite +6 melee (1d6+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Detect thoughts, spells

Special Qualities: Change shape; damage reduction 15/ good and piercing, darkvision 60 ft., spell resistance 34.

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +11

Alignment: Lawful evil

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 22

Skills: Bluff +20*, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +20* (+22* acting), Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (nature) +3, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +13, Move Silently +13, Perform (oratory) +16, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +12, Spot +11.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell.

CR: 17

Change Shape (Su): Ravahnasa Singh can adopt humanoid form at will and remain in that form indefinitely; this change of form cannot be dispelled, though *true seeing* reveals Ravahnasa for what he is and, if killed, he returns to his natural form. Ravahnasa cannot use his claw or bite attacks when in humanoid form. Changing from rakshasa to humanoid and back counts as a standard action for Ravahnasa. For the last weeks, he has used this ability to appear as one of Aogarn's dragon guards (Disguise check total +36 to convince one of the dragon guards that he is one of them)

Detect Thoughts (Su): Ravahnasa Singh can constantly *detect thoughts*, as the spell (caster level 18th, Will save DC 18 negates), as a supernatural ability. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Spells Known (6/8/8/7/7/6/3; base DC = 16 + spell level): 0th—*daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, message, light, prestidigitation, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*chill touch, disguise self, identify, mage armour, magic missile*; 2nd—*command undead, darkness, eagle's splendour, pyrotechnics, web*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball, suggestion, vampiric touch*; 4th—*charm monster, phantasmal killer, scrying, stonesskin*; 5th—*cloudkill, dominate person, teleport*; 6th—*flesh to stone, legend lore*; 7th—*project image*.

Skills: Ravahnasa Singh has a +4 racial bonus on Bluff and Disguise checks. *When using his detect thoughts ability, these bonuses increase by +8. Add another +10 bonus to Disguise checks when Ravahnasa is using his change shape ability.

Possessions: Dragon guard uniform, masterwork greatsword, exotic coloured mantle (treat as *cloak of charisma*), pearl ring (*ring of protection* +2), *bag of holding (type II)* containing 11,302 gp, 1100 pp, 3 blue quartz gems (10gp each), 5 bloodstones (50 gp each), 3 red spinels (100 gp each), 3 aquamarines (100 gp each) and 4 blue sapphires (1000 gp each).

When fighting, Ravahnasa Singh is creative, unpredictable and annoying. He prefers to slowly undermine his opponents' forces with hit-and-run tactics, using annoying and thwarting spells such as *dispel magic, project image, pyrotechnics* and *web*; he resorts to offensive effects (*phantasmal killer, cloudkill* and so forth) only to deliver the final strike or to save his own life if the opposition proves too strong to play games with.

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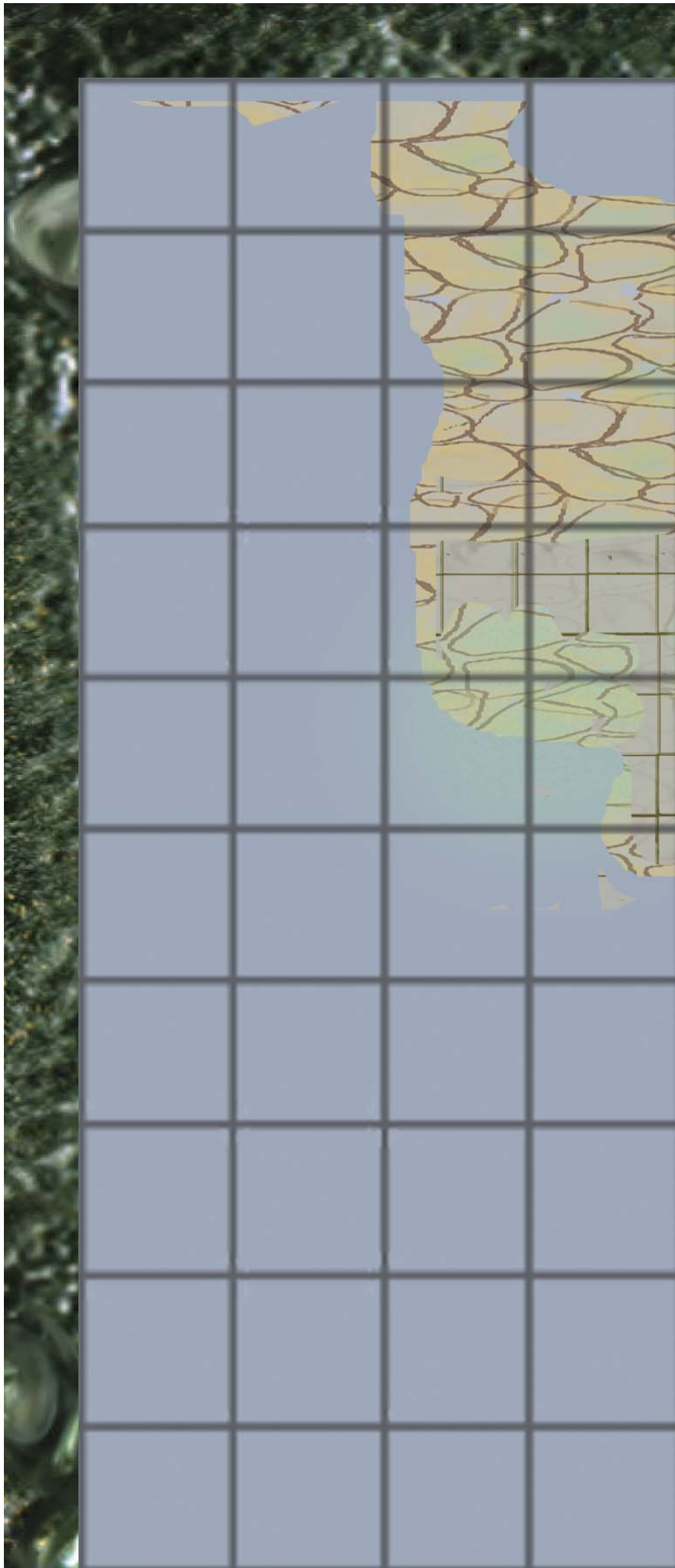
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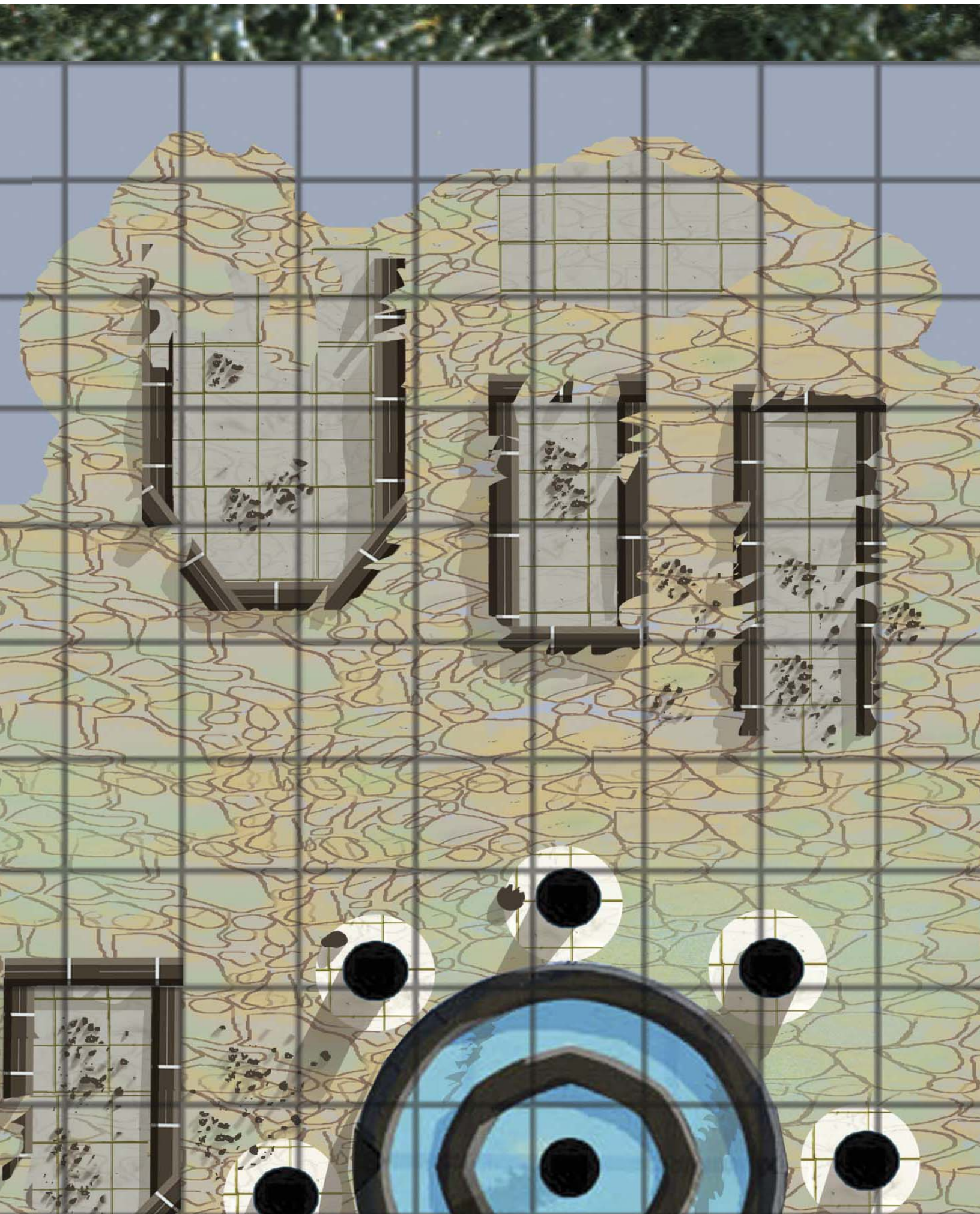
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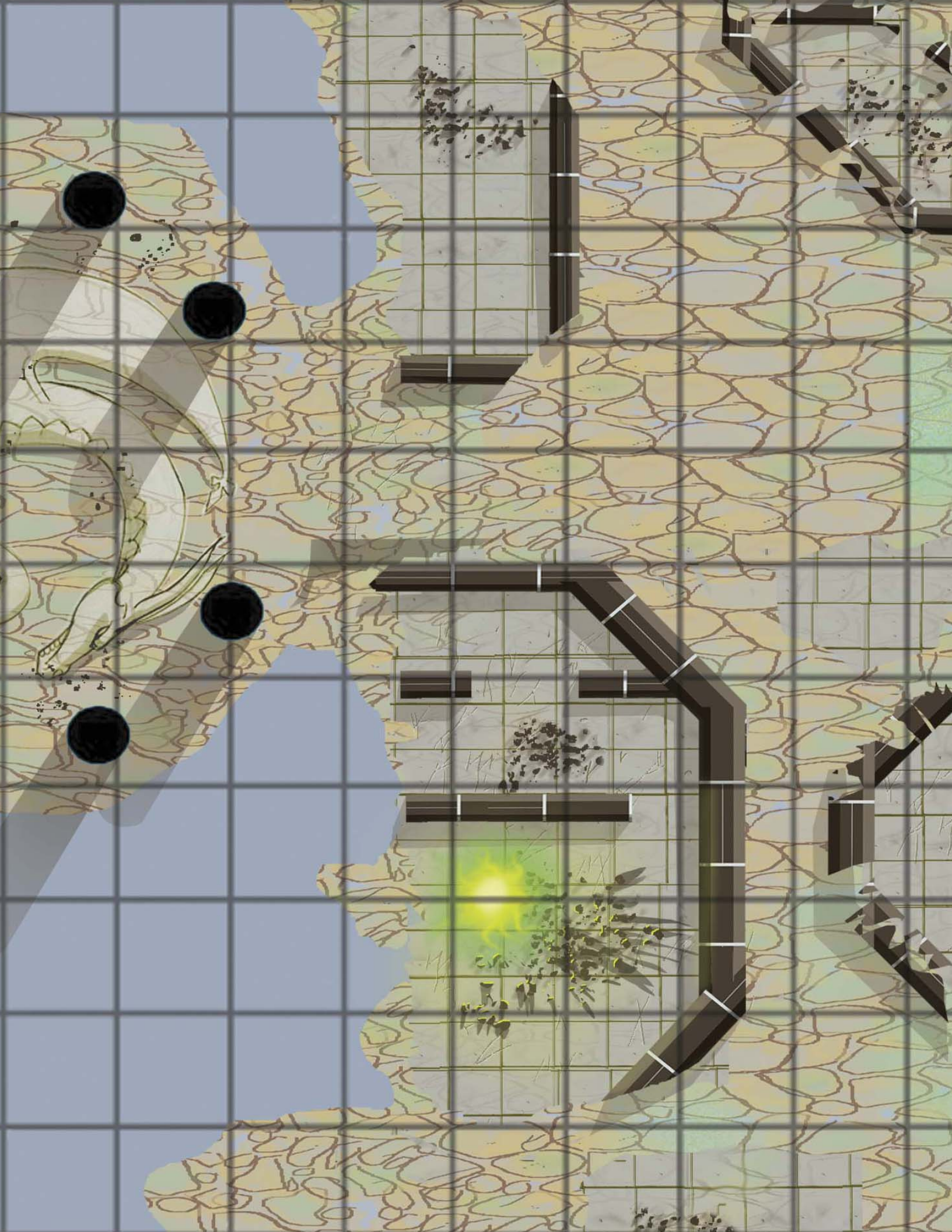
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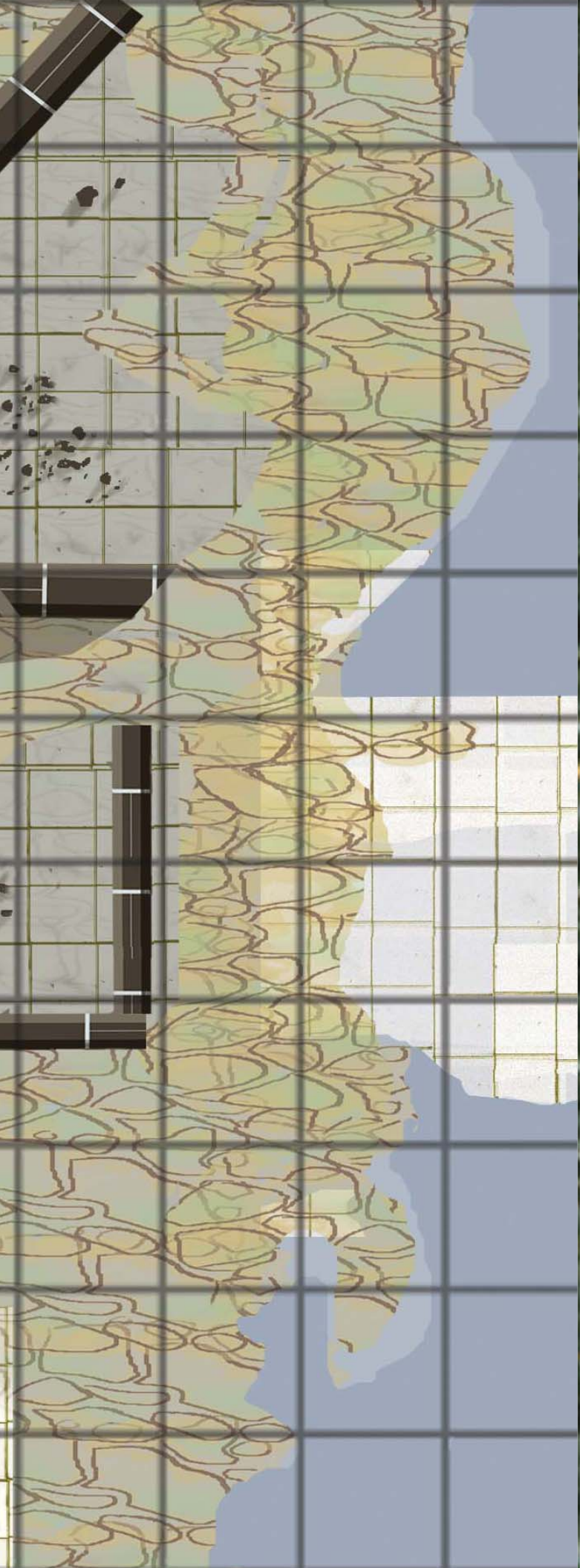


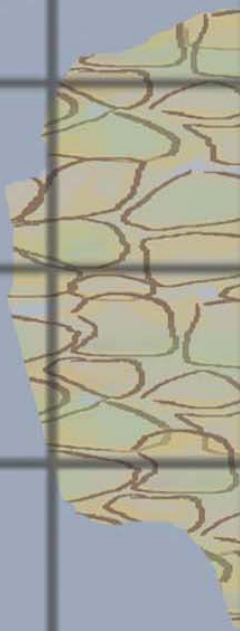






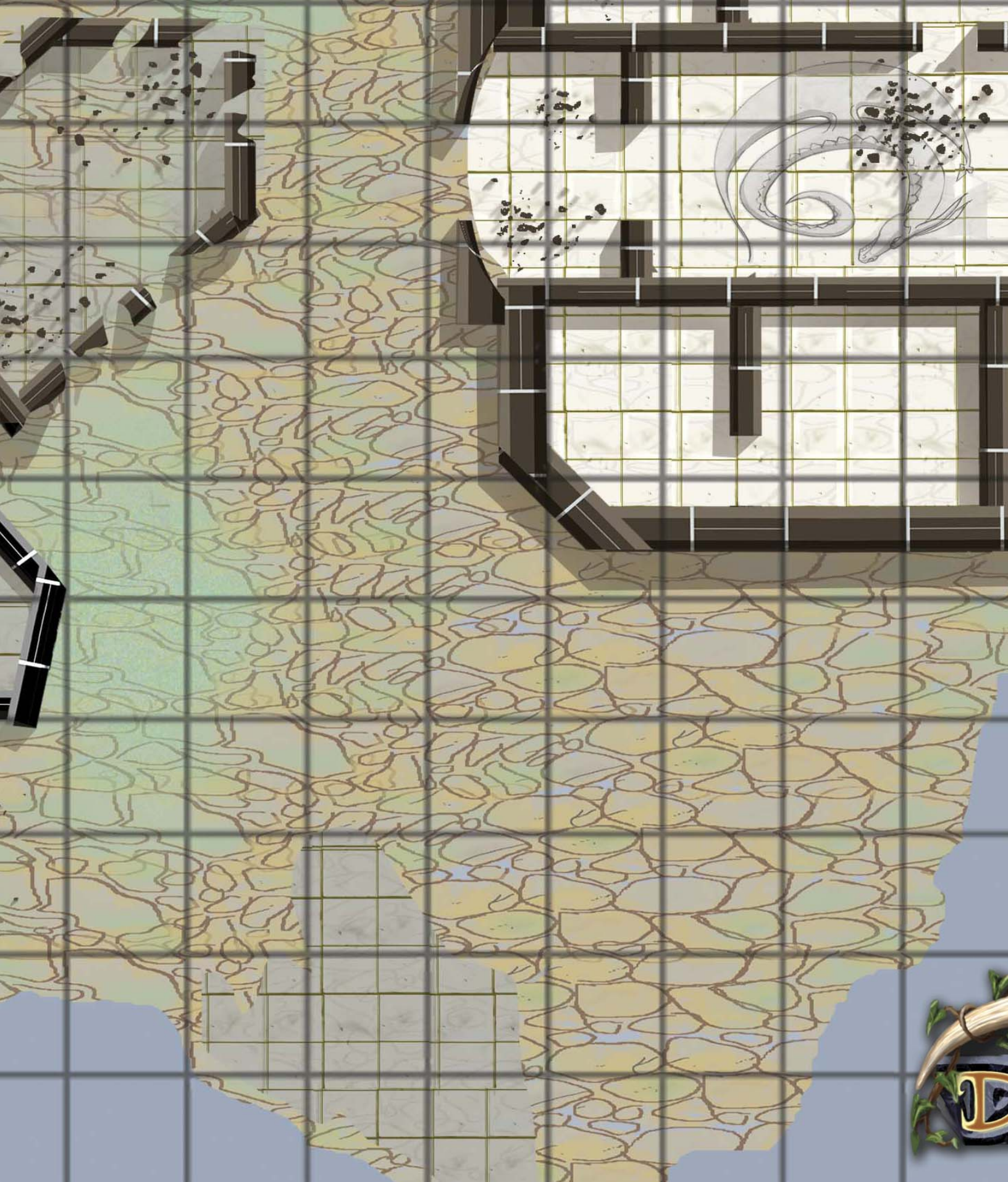


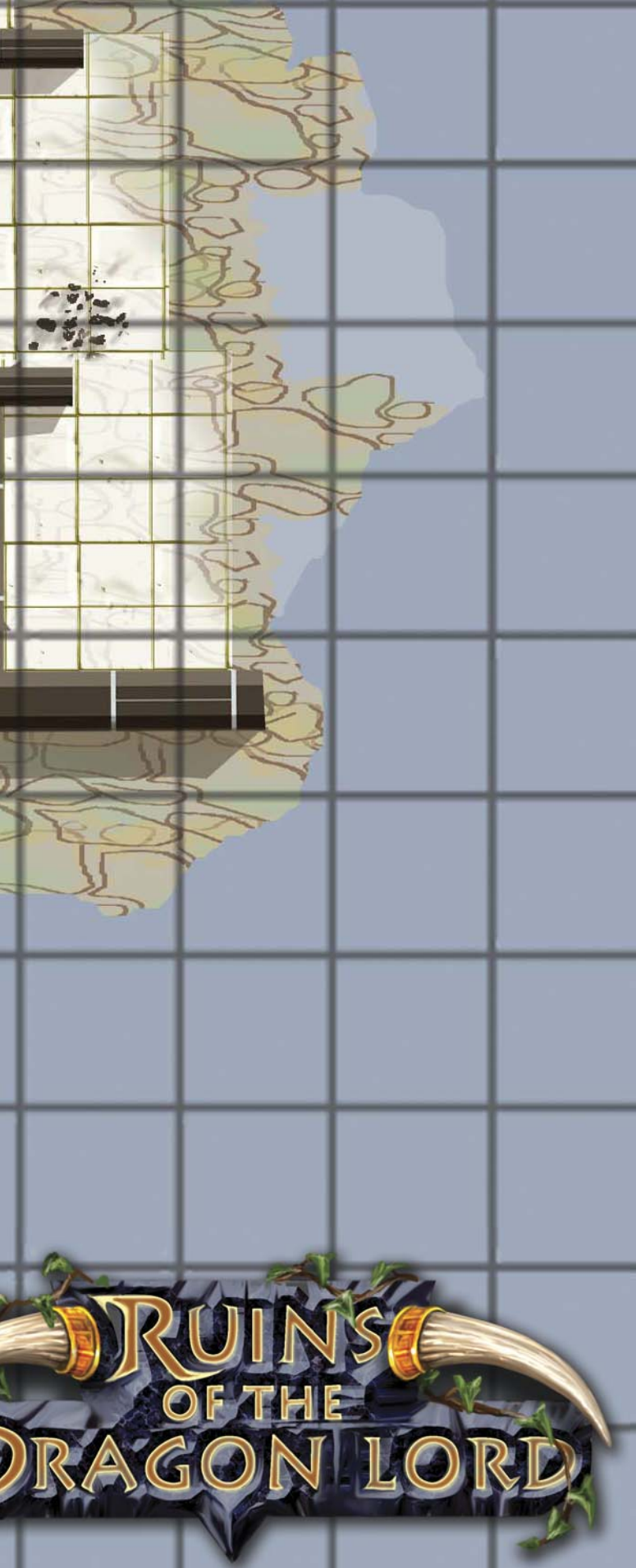


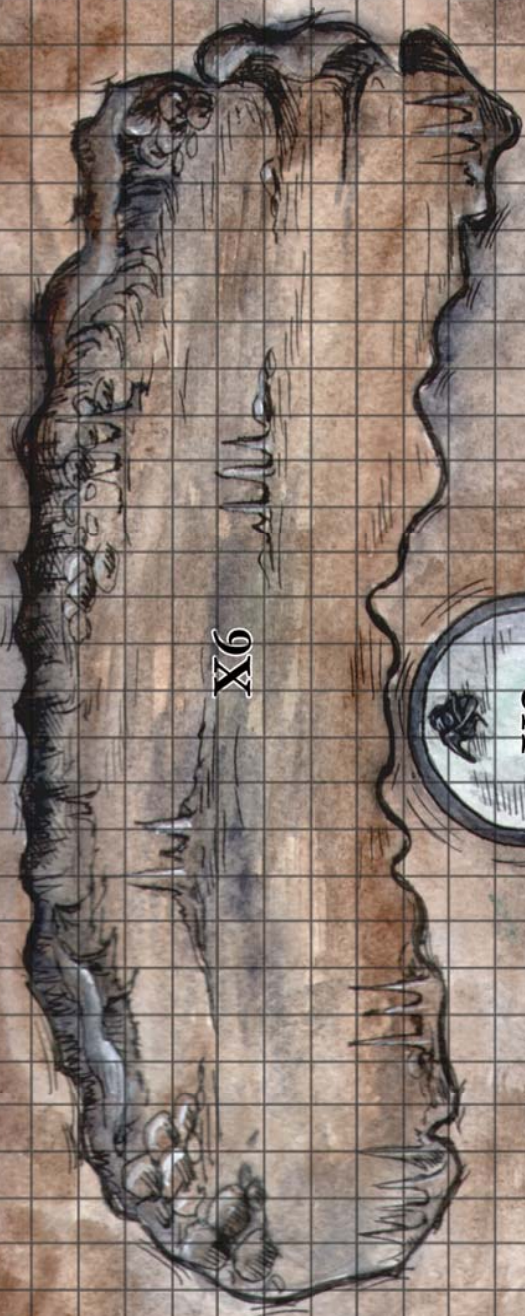


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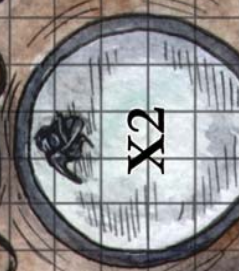








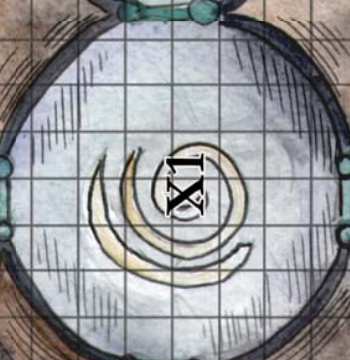
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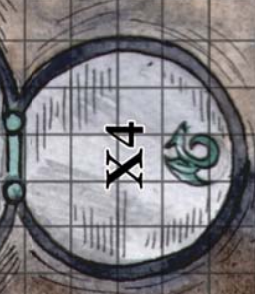
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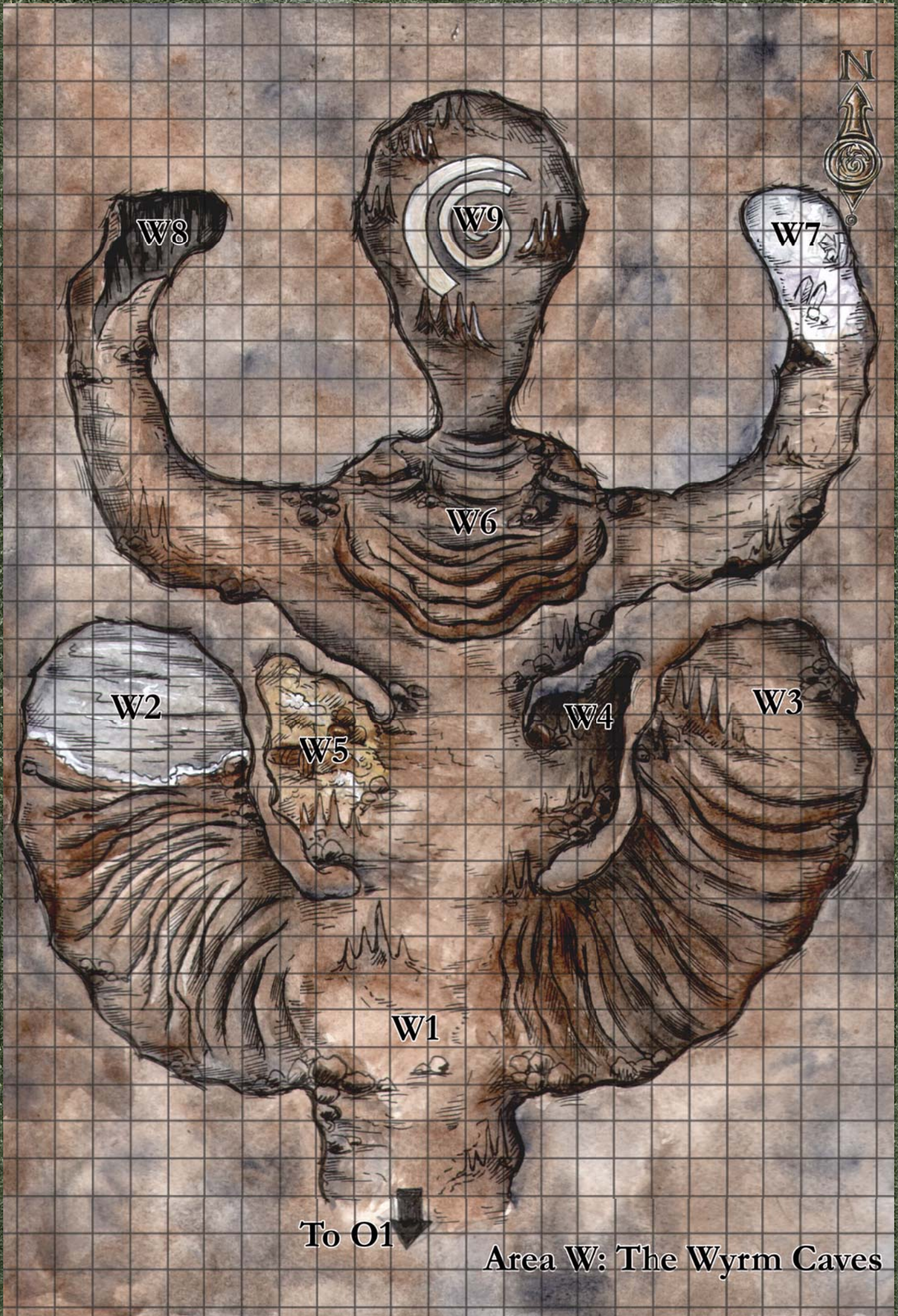


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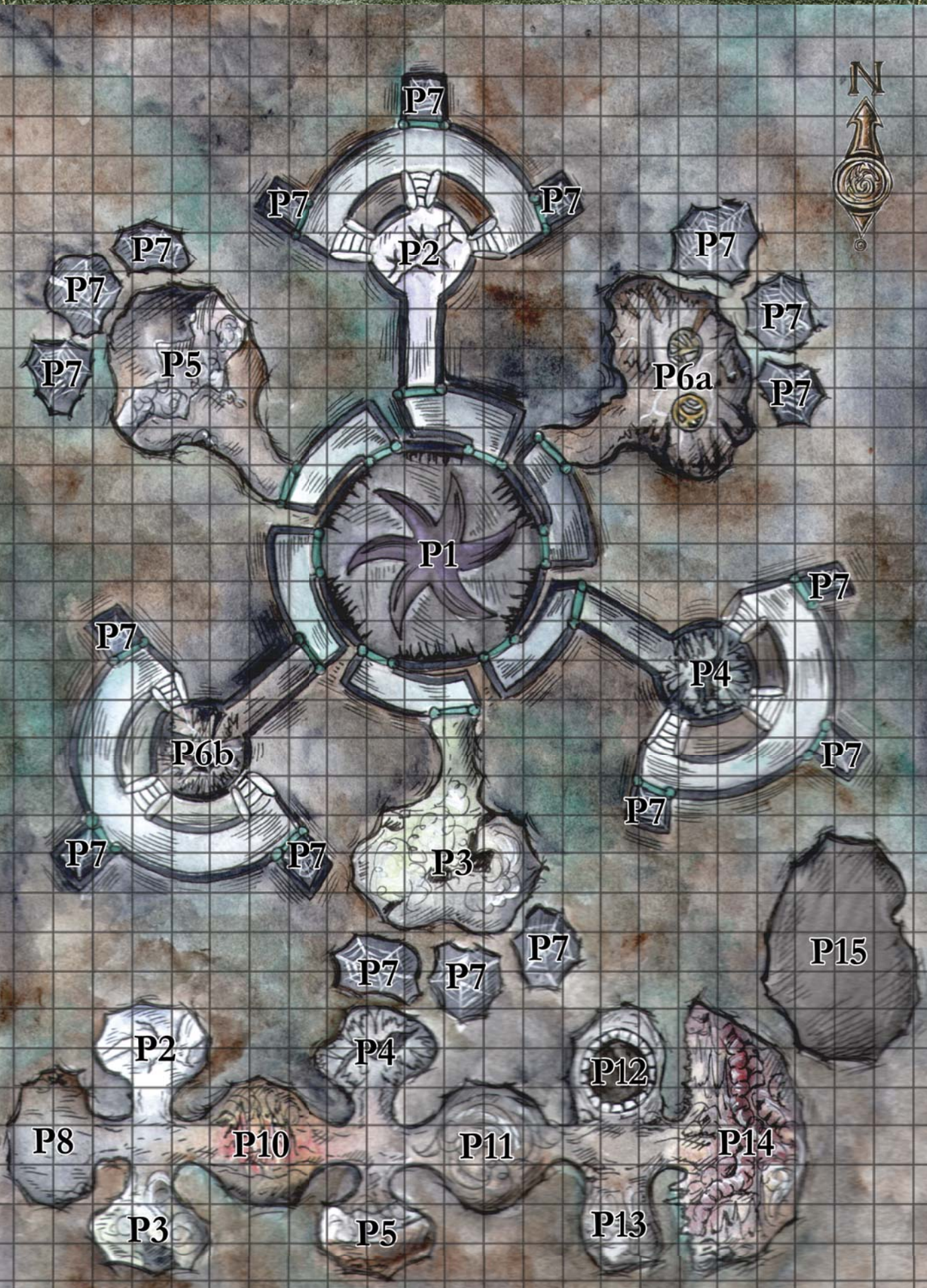
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Area X: Temple of the Nameless Wyrm



To O1

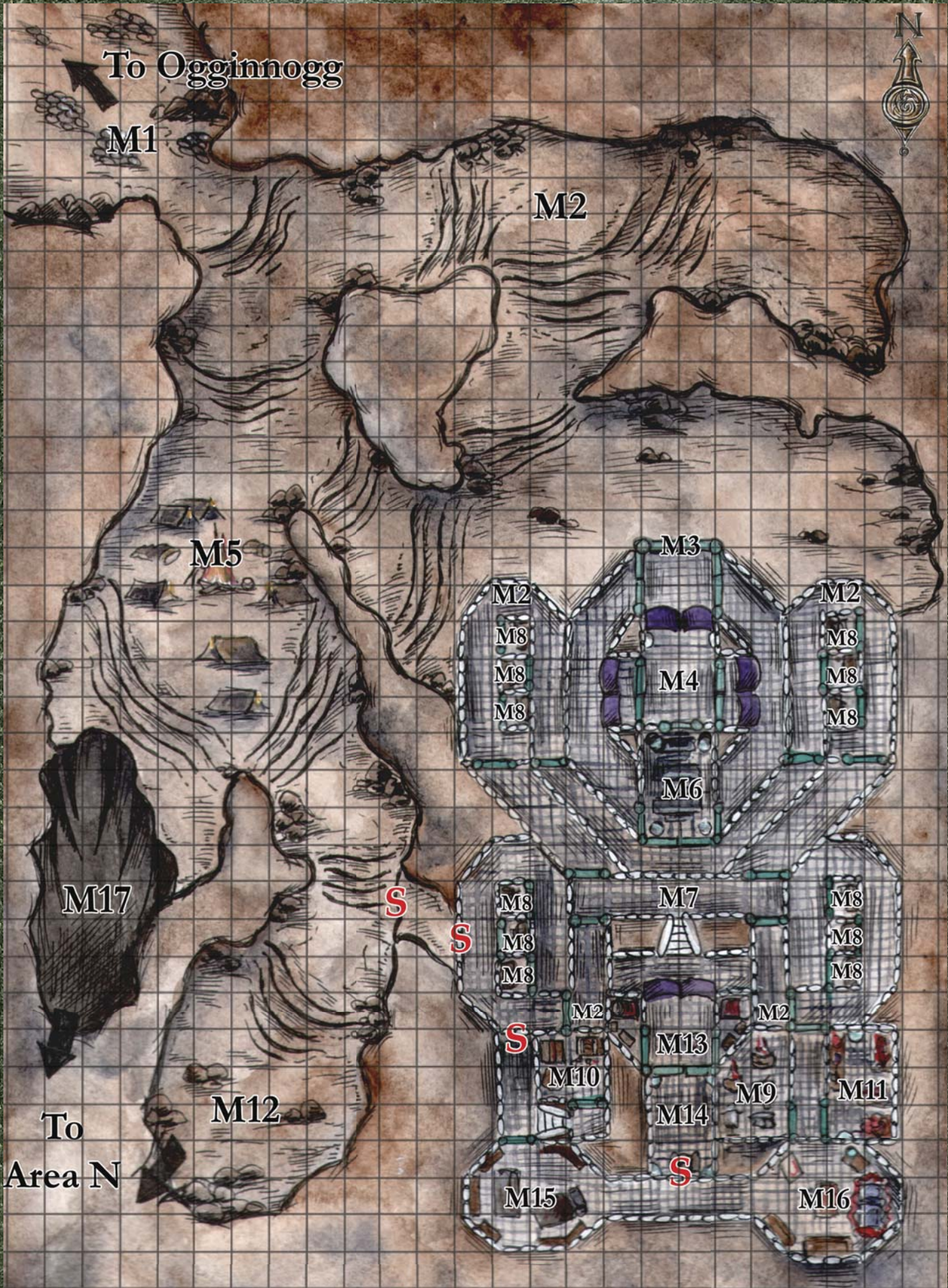
Area W: The Wyrms Caves



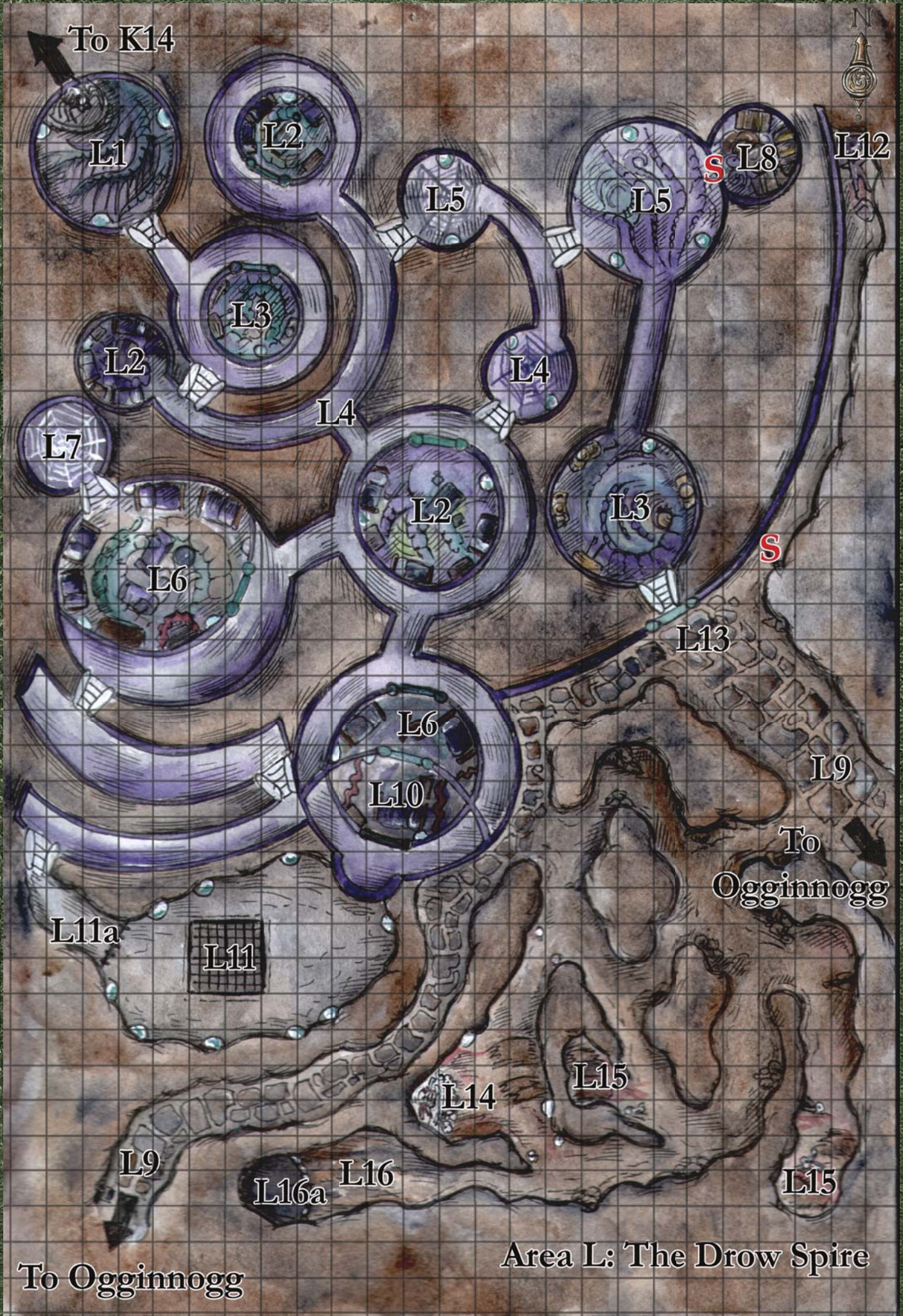
Area P: Hellfast

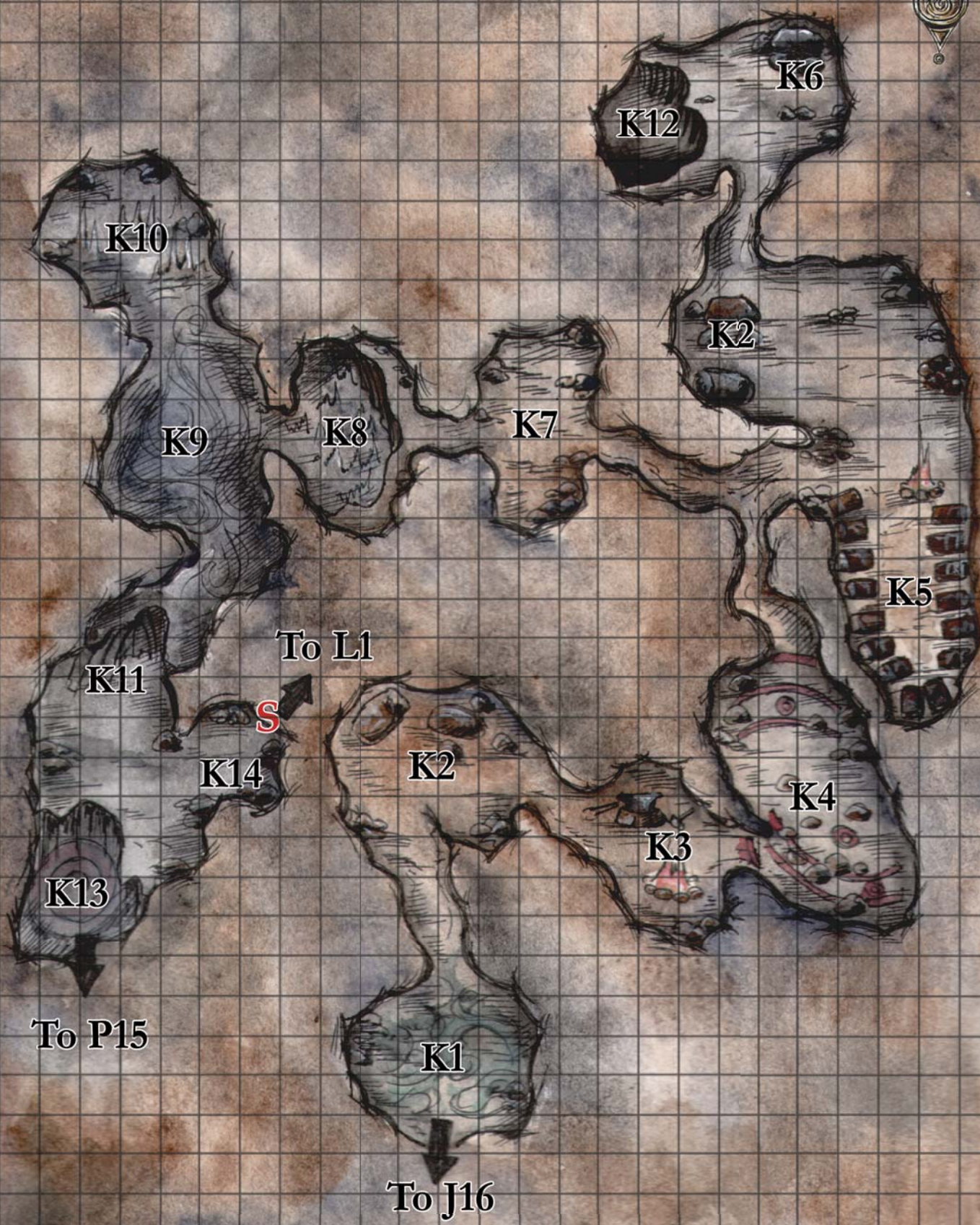


Area N: The Lightless Depths

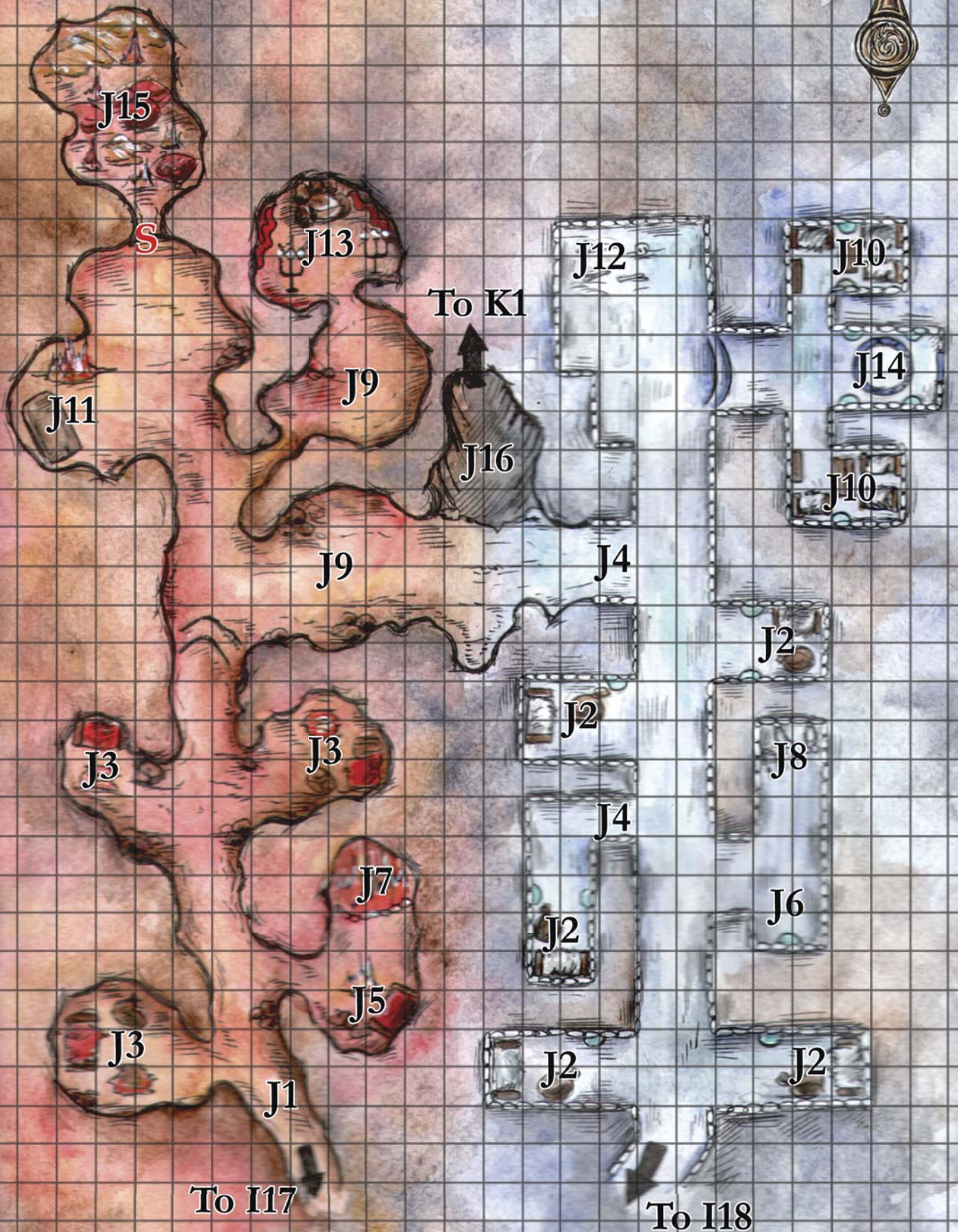


Area M: Dwergard





Area K: The Dark Warrens



Area J: The Giant Caves

To the Old Moru Road



To J1

To J2



I2

I17

I18

I14

I13

I15

I16

I11

I12

I9

I10

I6

I5

I3

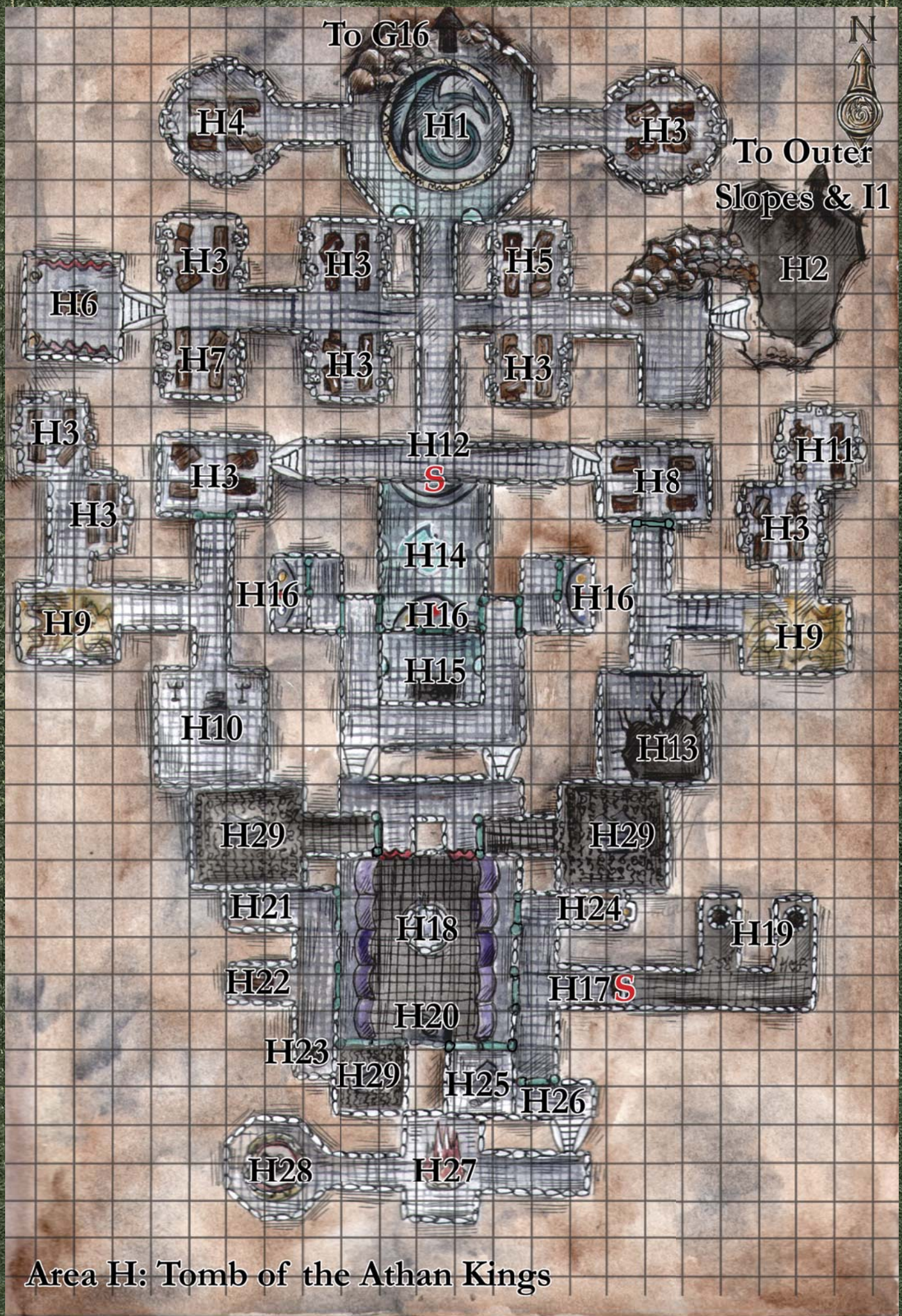
I7

I1

I8

I4

To H2



Area H: Tomb of the Athan Kings



To F15

G1

G3

G4

G6

G3

G9

G5

G7

G10

G2

G17

To
F16

G8

G3

G12

G11

G13

G3

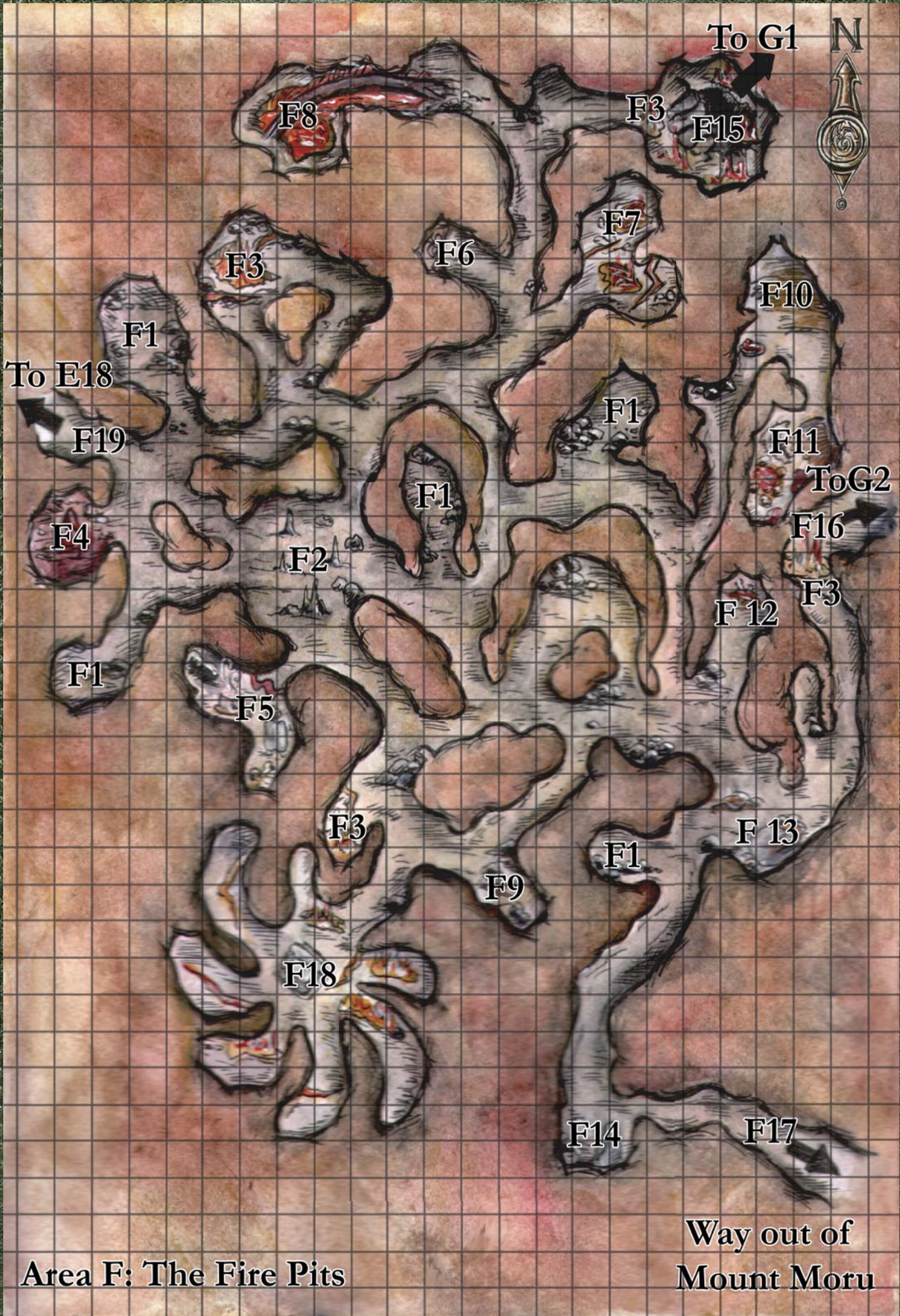
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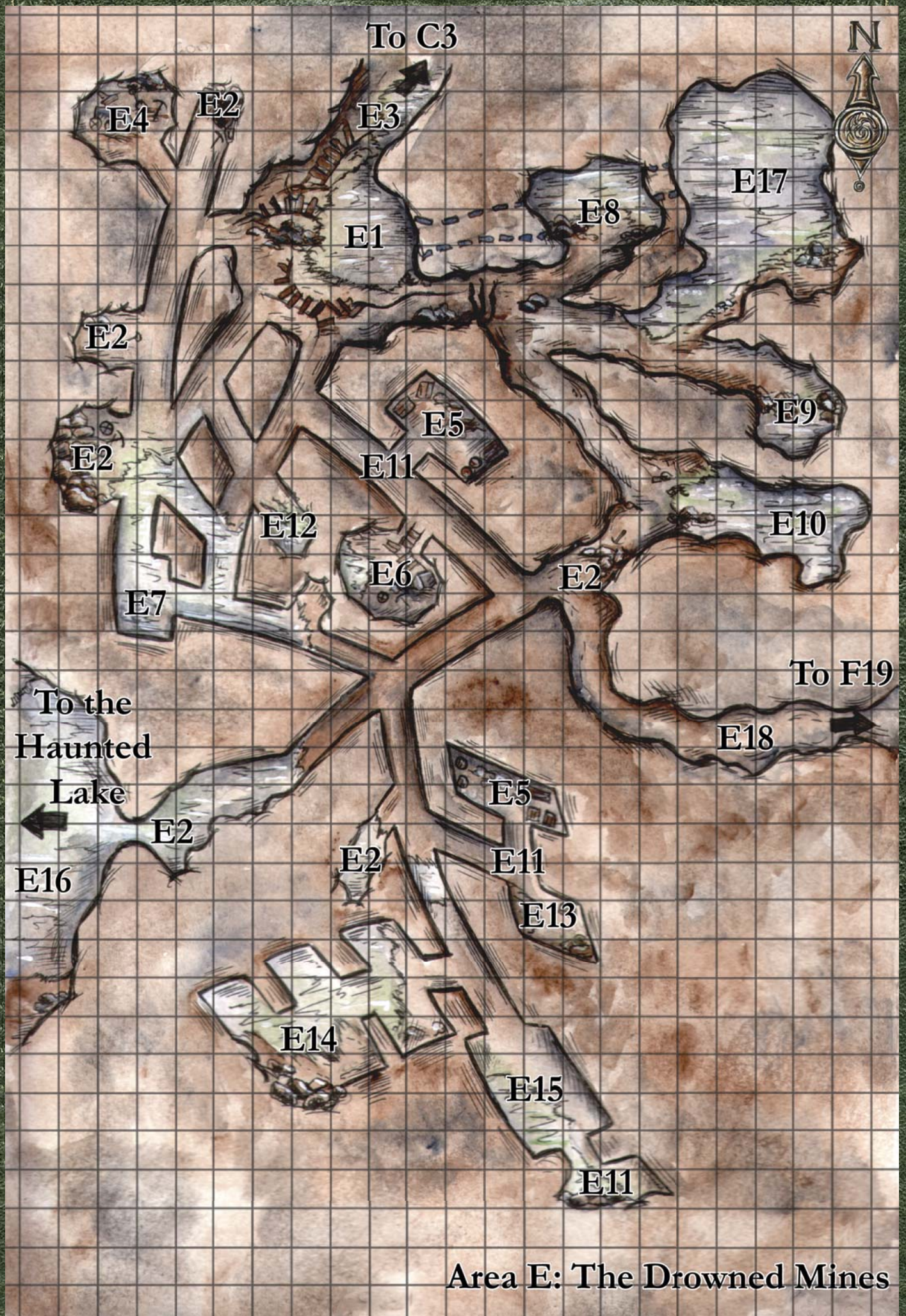
To H1

Area G: The Deep Caves

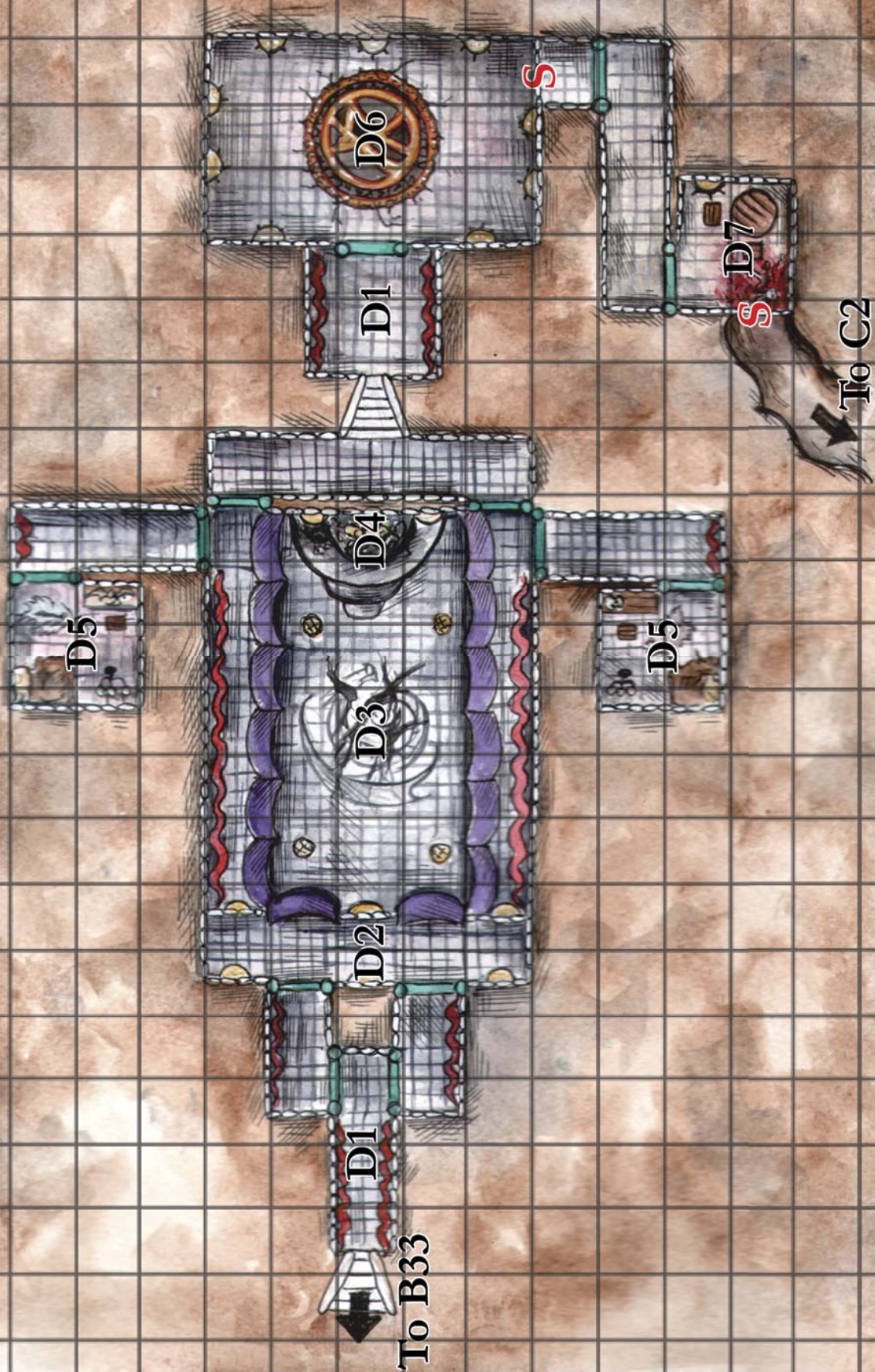


Area F: The Fire Pits

Way out of
Mount Moru



Area E: The Drowned Mines



To C2

To B33

Area D: Temple of the Goblin God



To B32

C1

C4

C4

C4

C4

C10

To D7

C2

C3

C7

C8

To E3

C5

C6

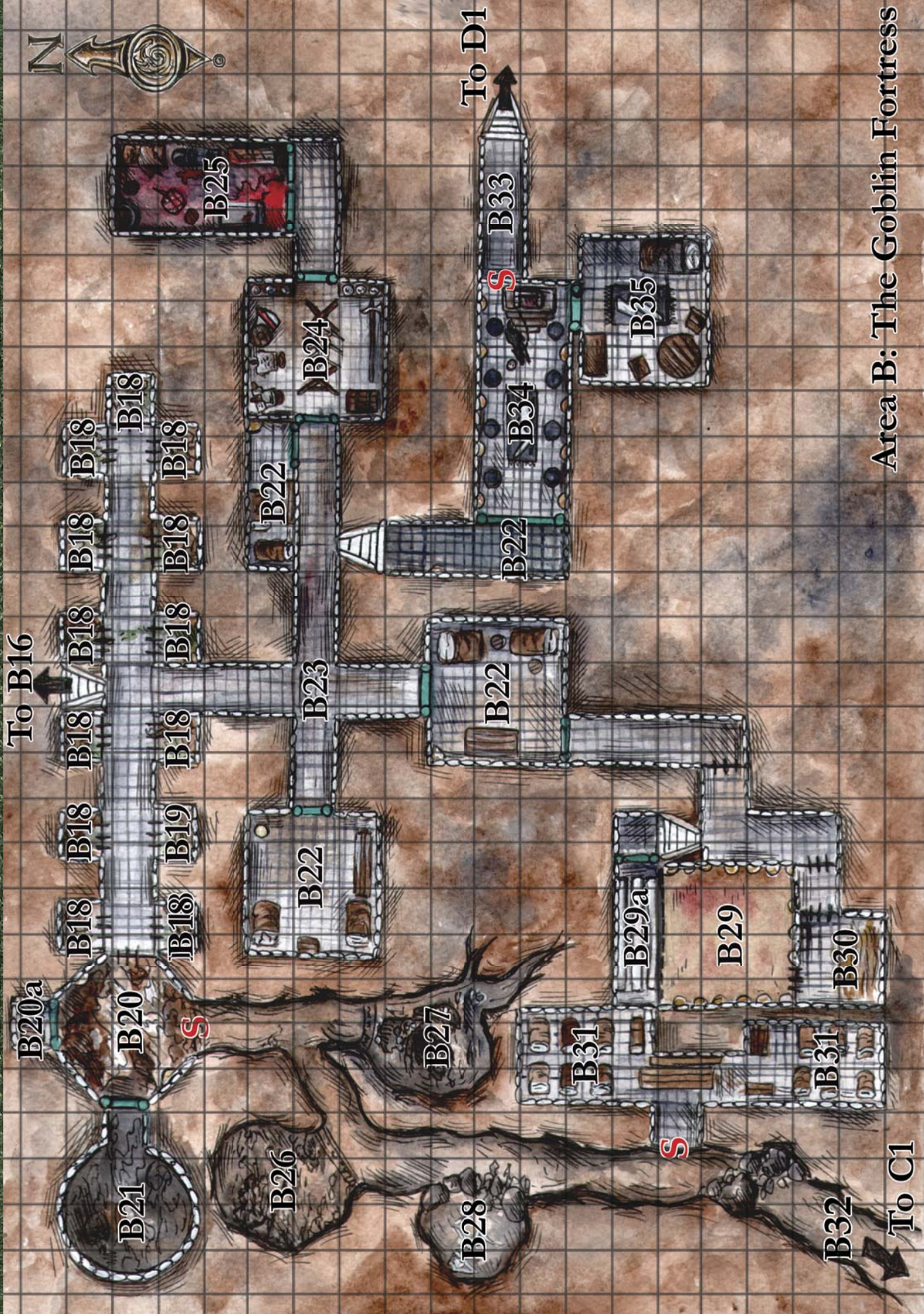
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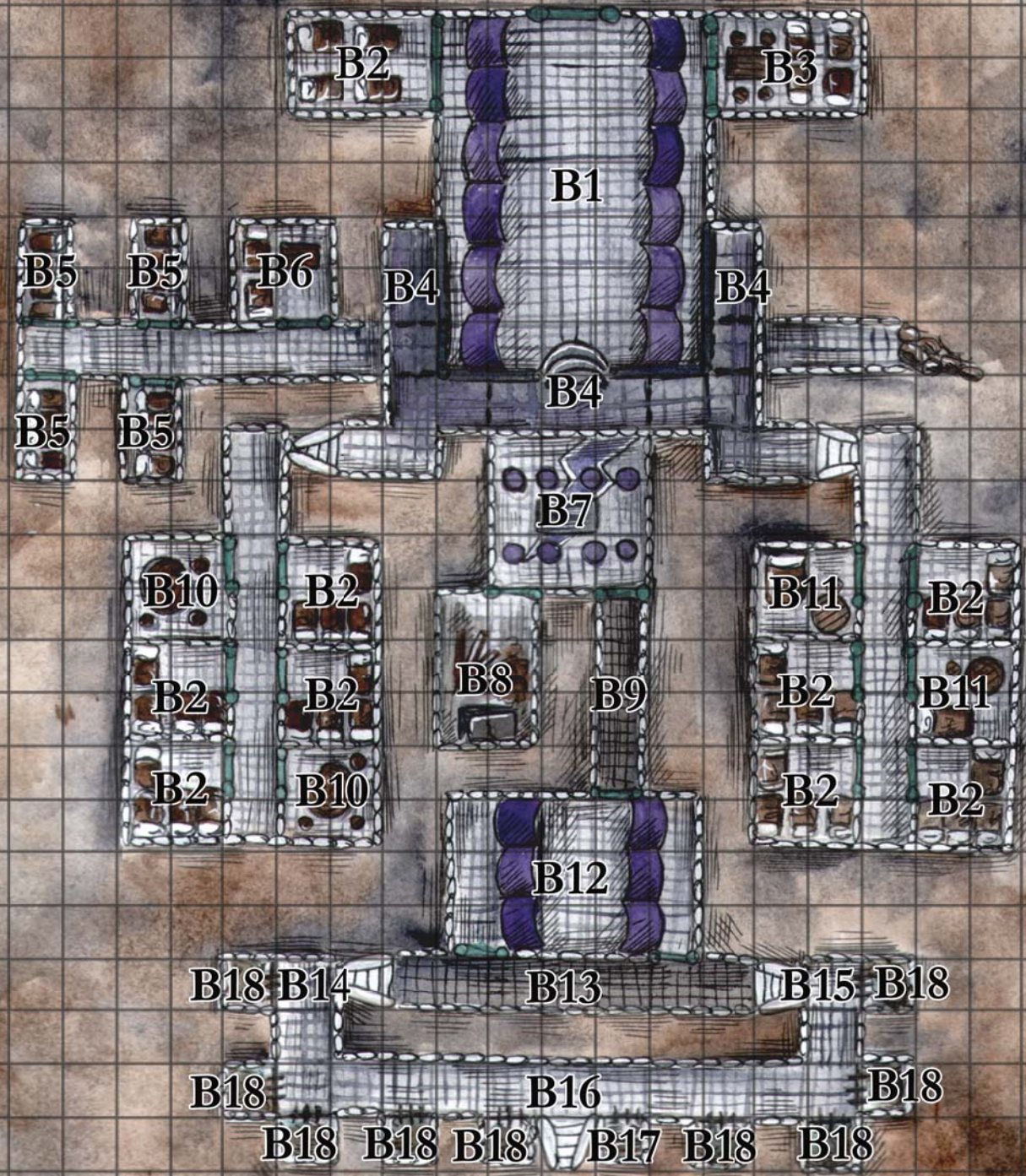
Area C: The Lost Tunnels



Area B: The Goblin Fortress



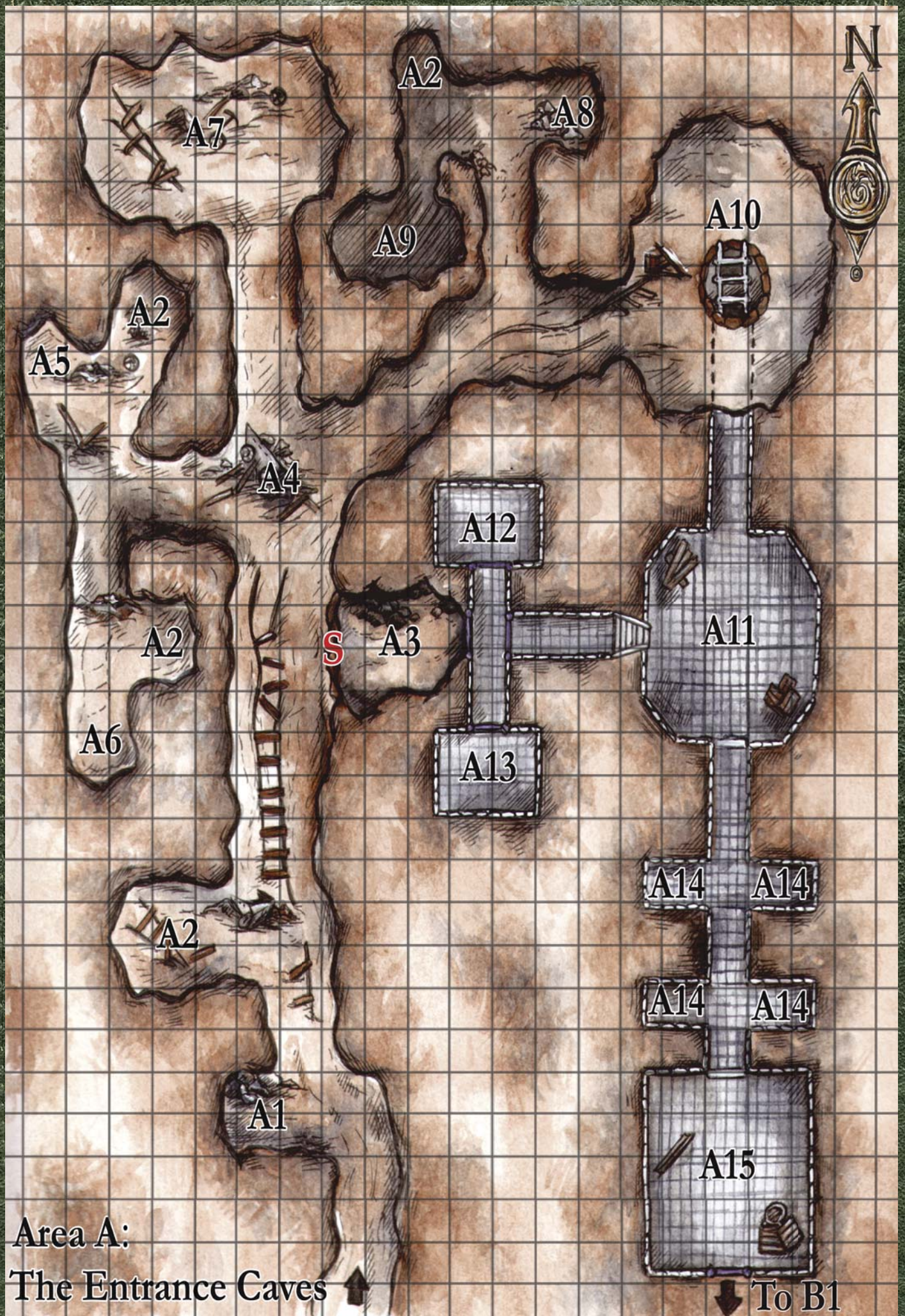
To A15



To Lower Levels



Area B: The Goblin Fortress

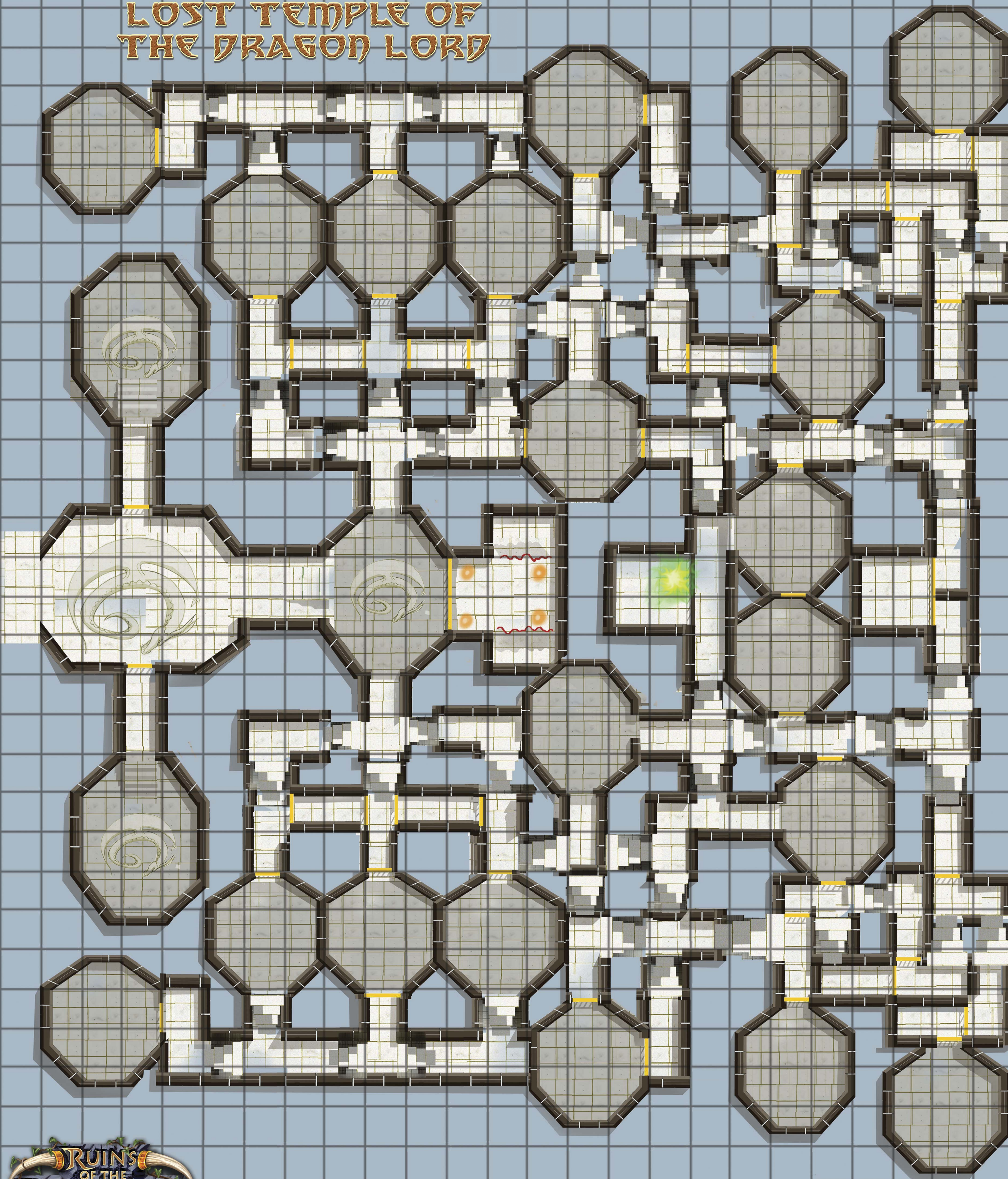


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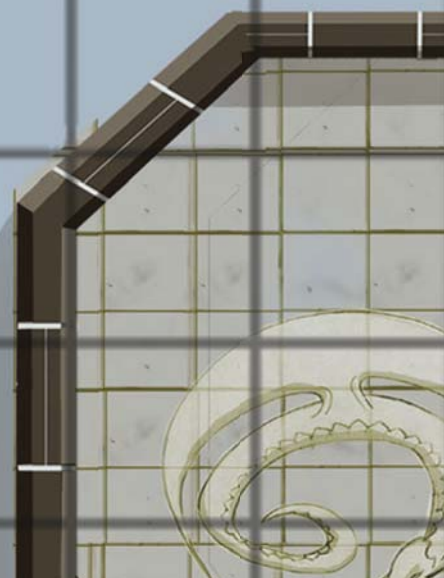
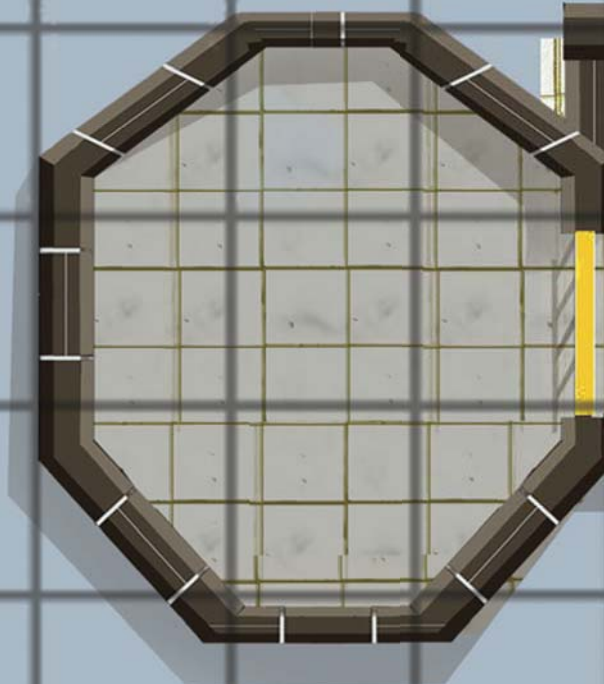
The Entrance Caves

To B1

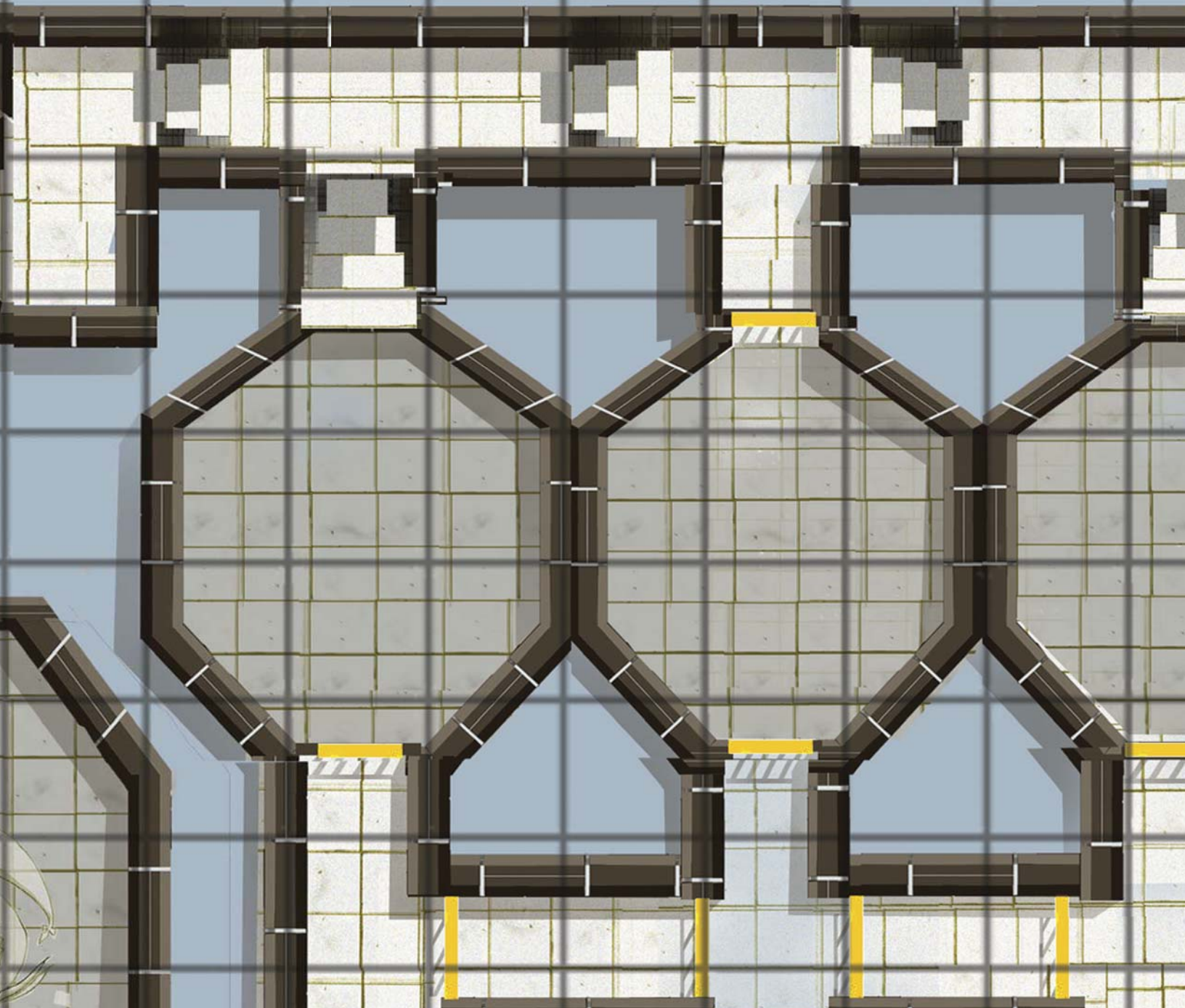
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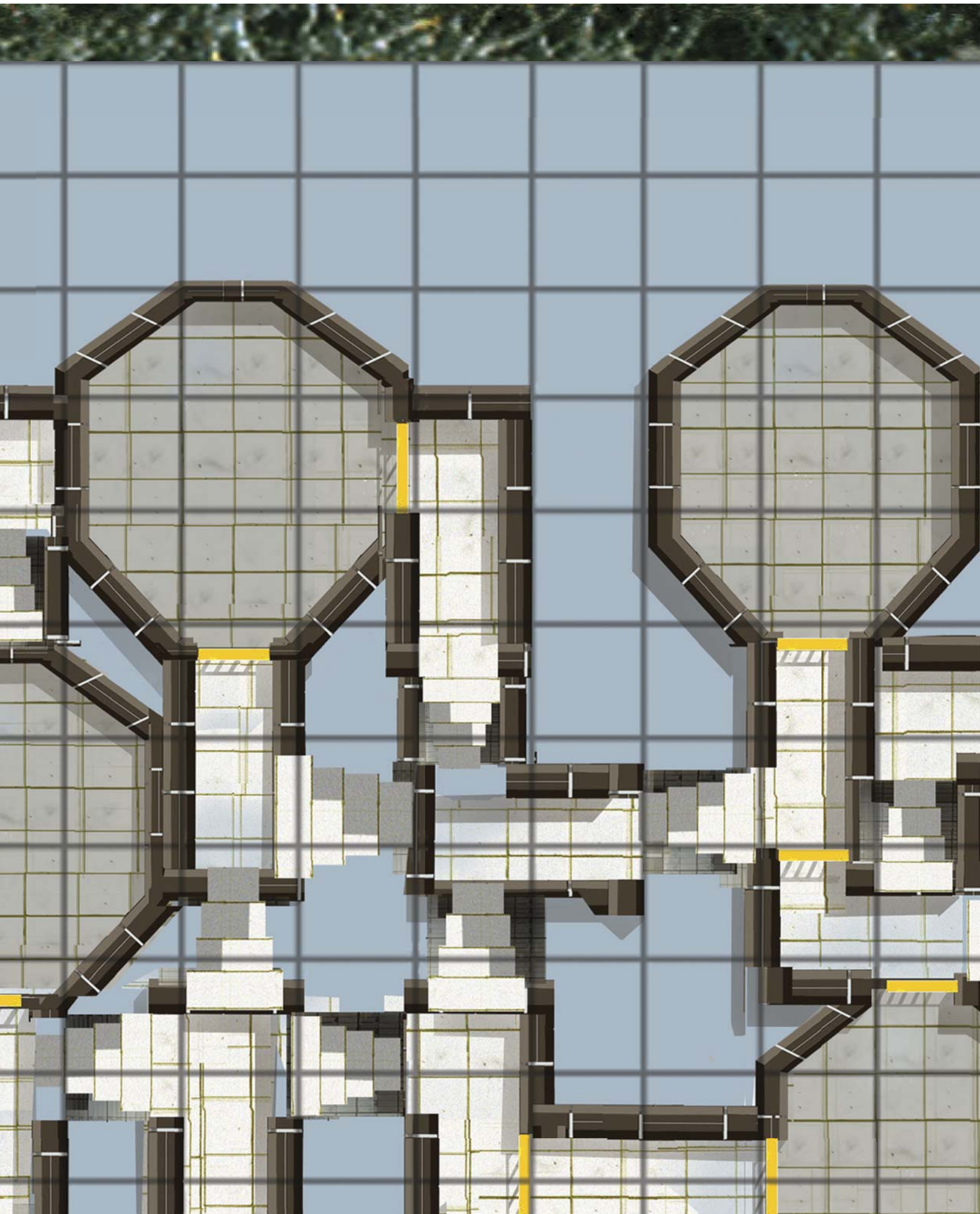


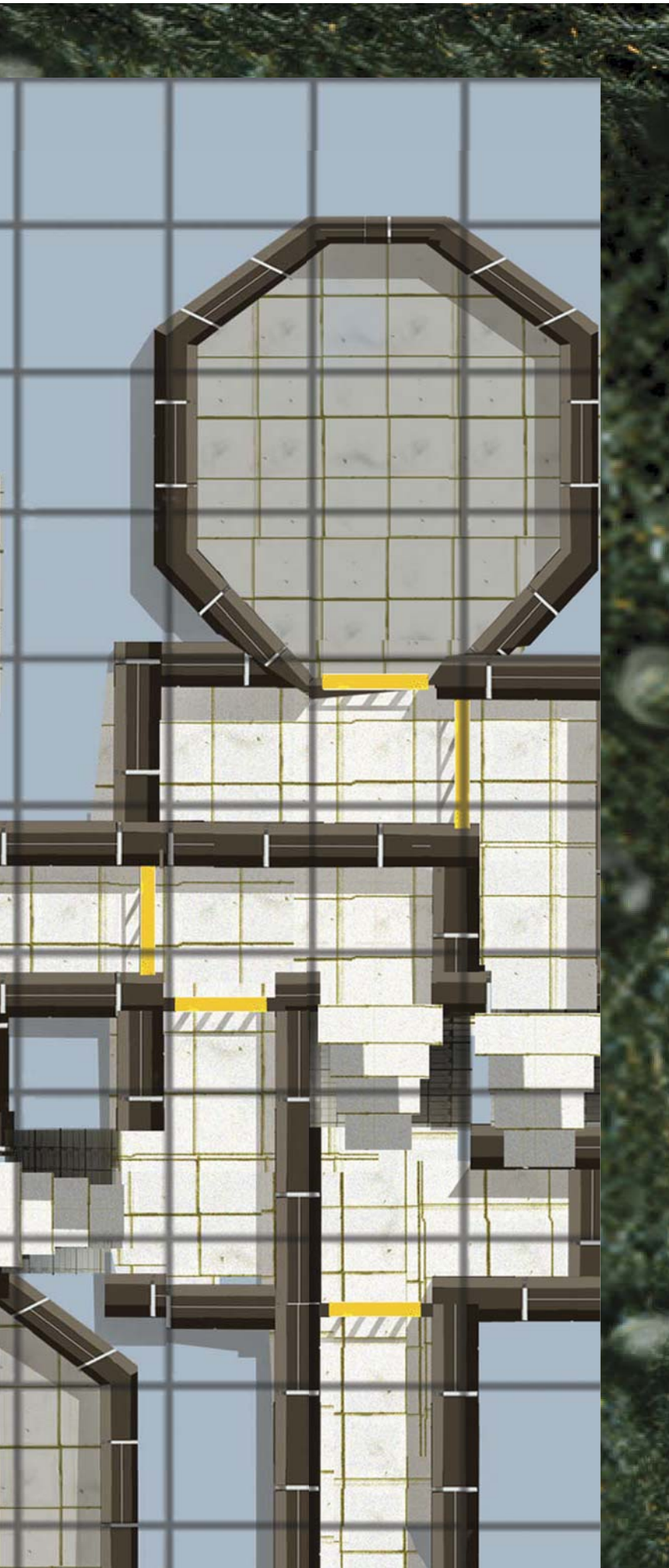
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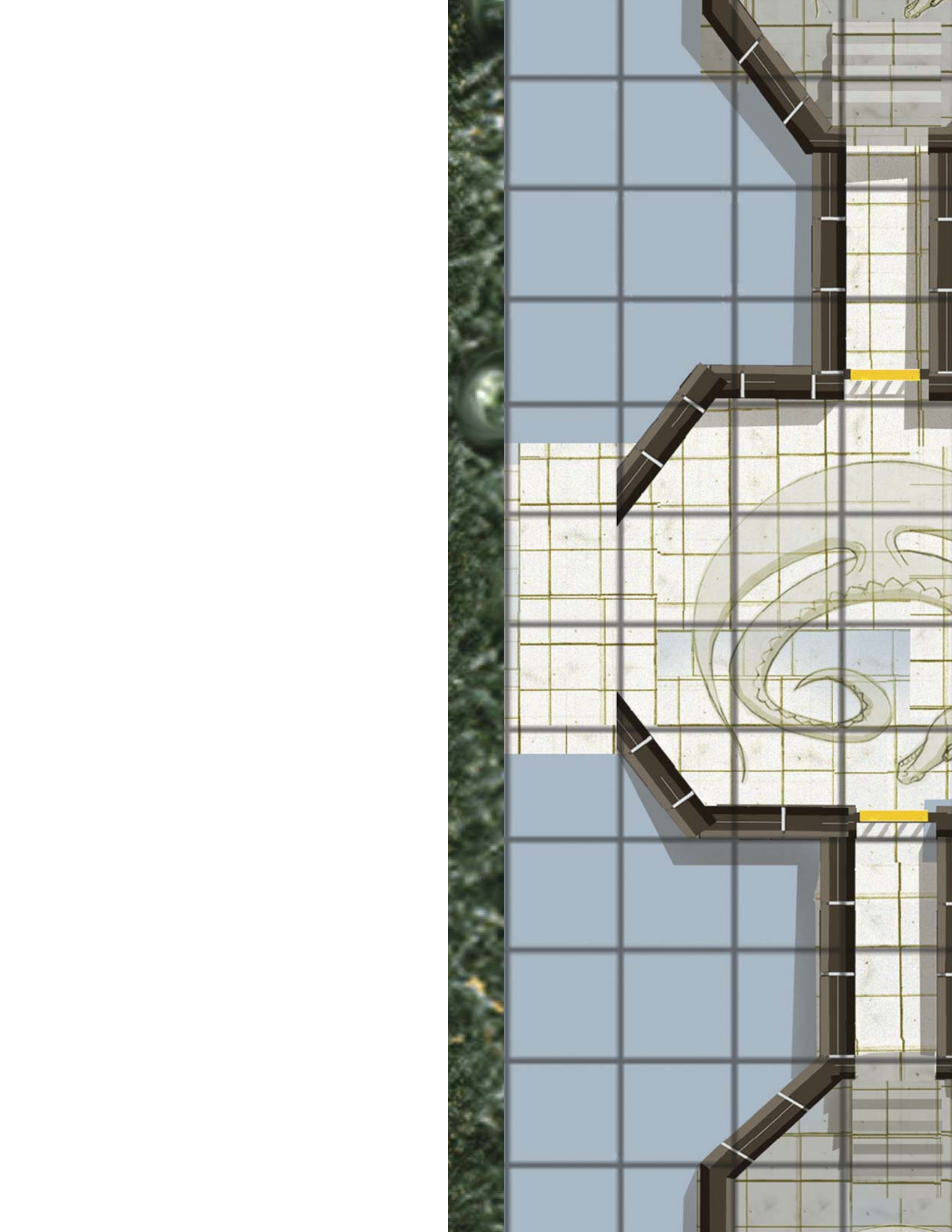


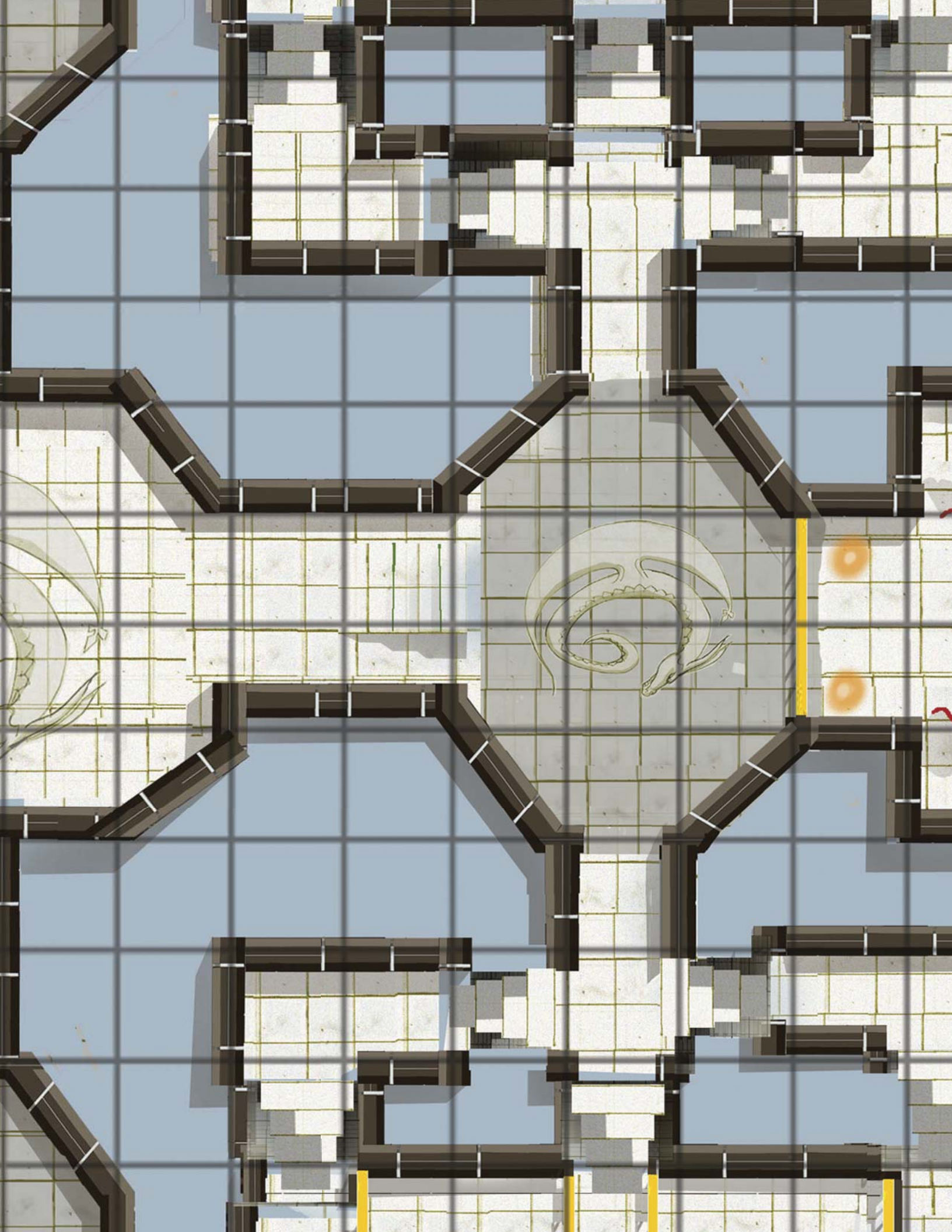
LOST TEMPLE OF THE DRAGON LORD

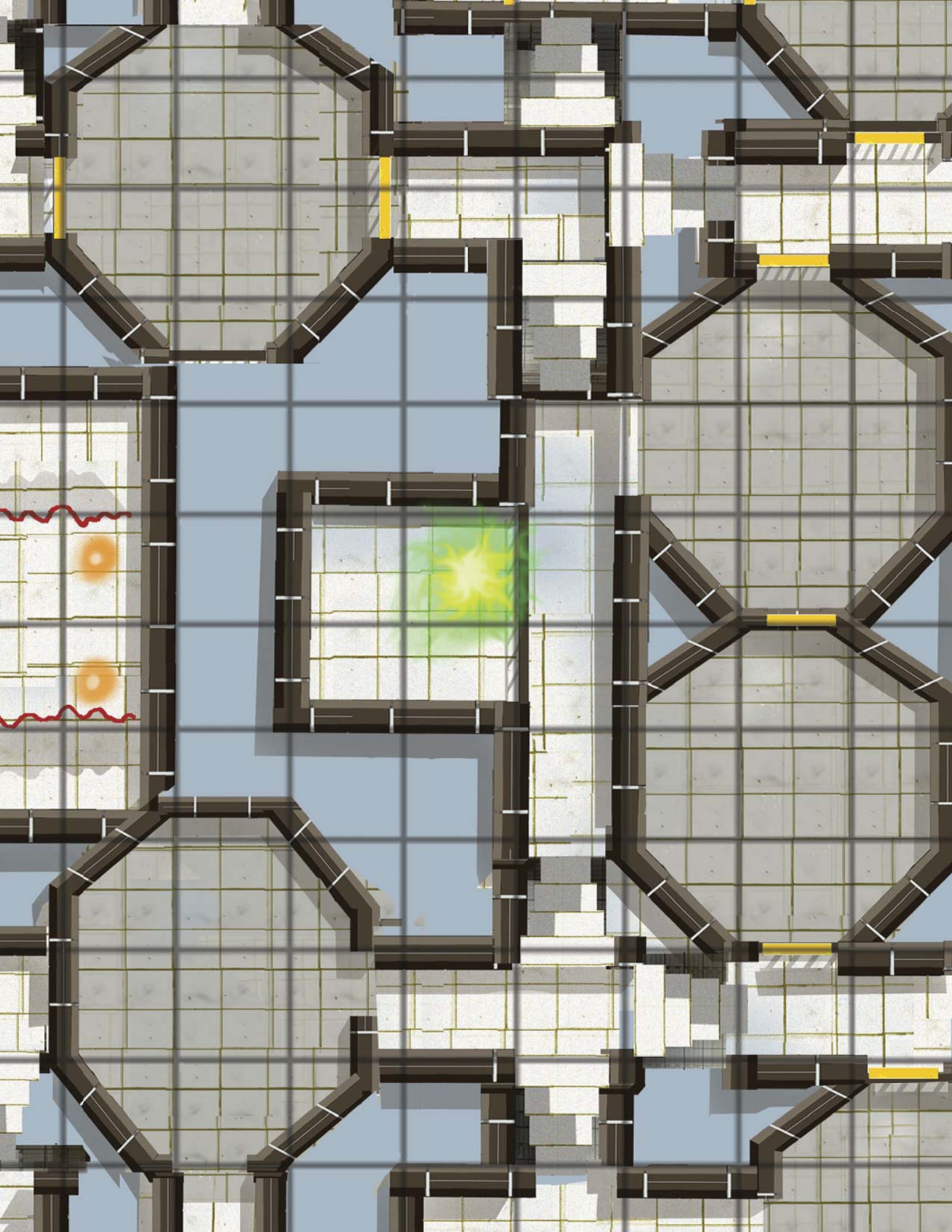


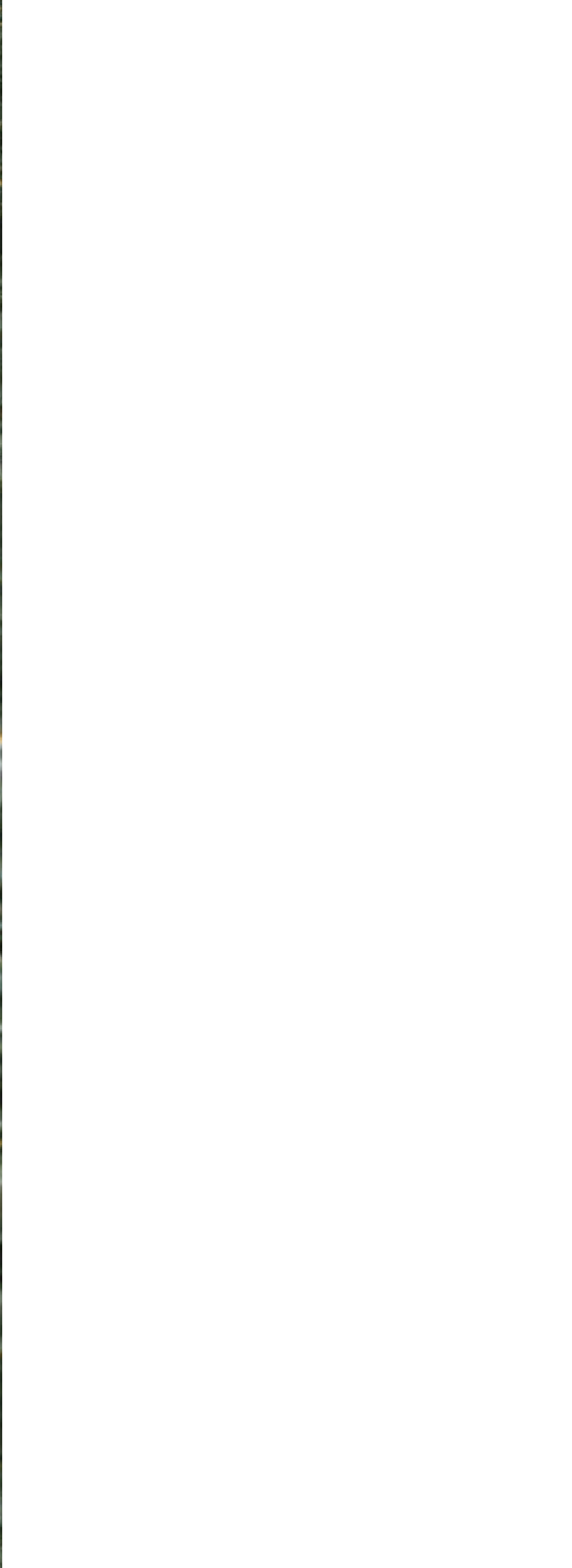
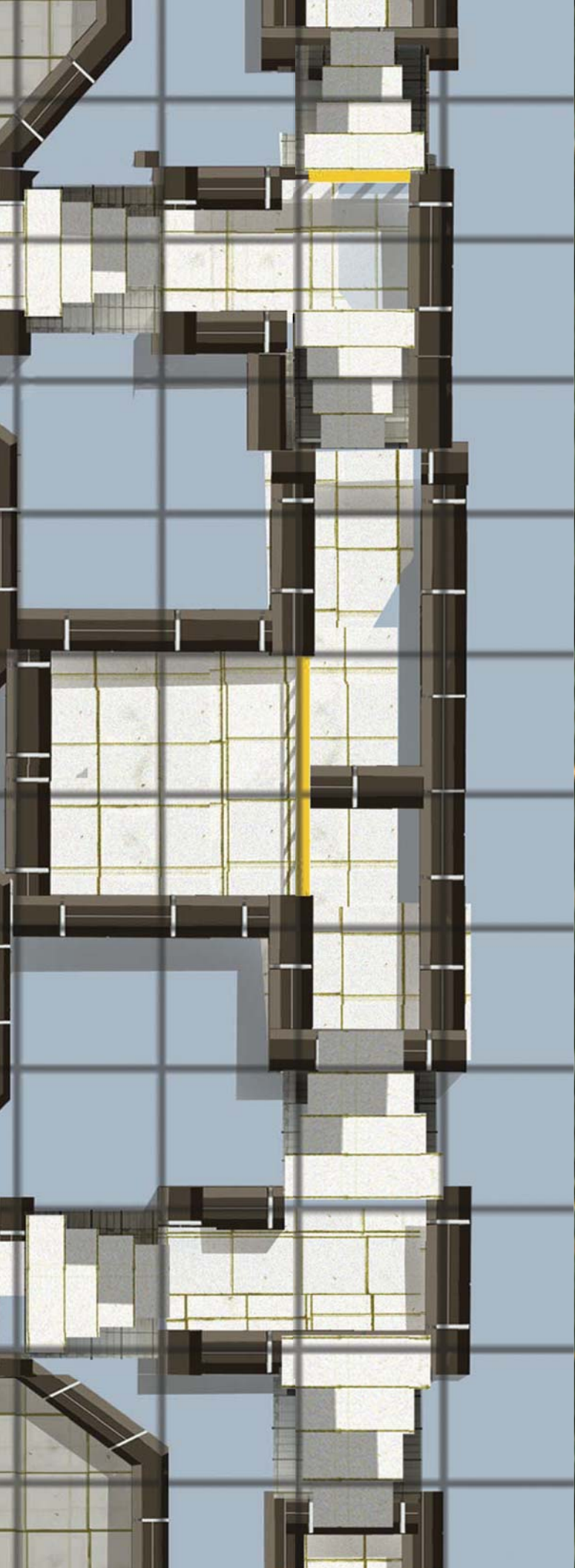


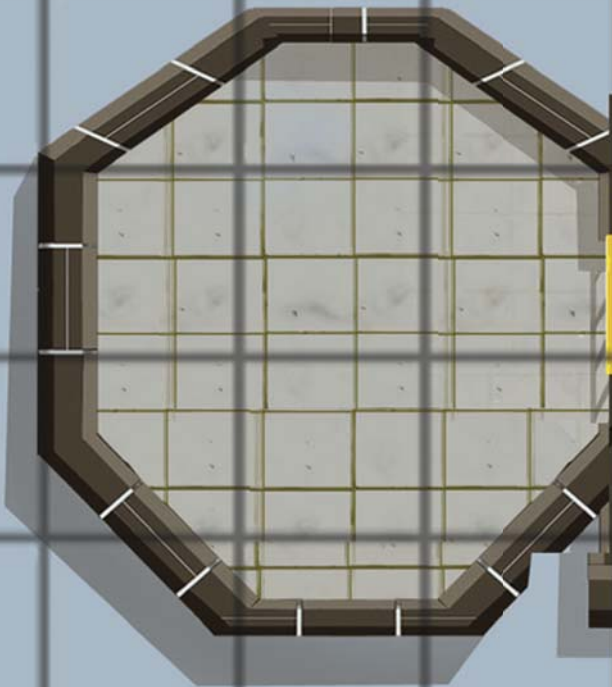
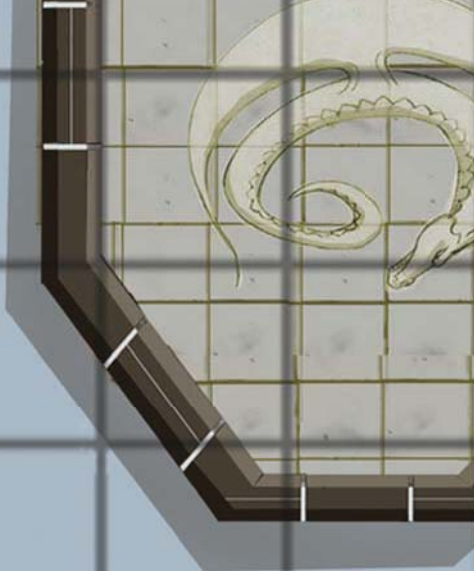




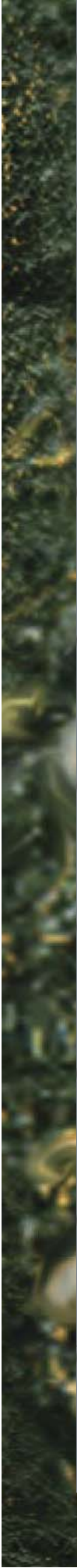


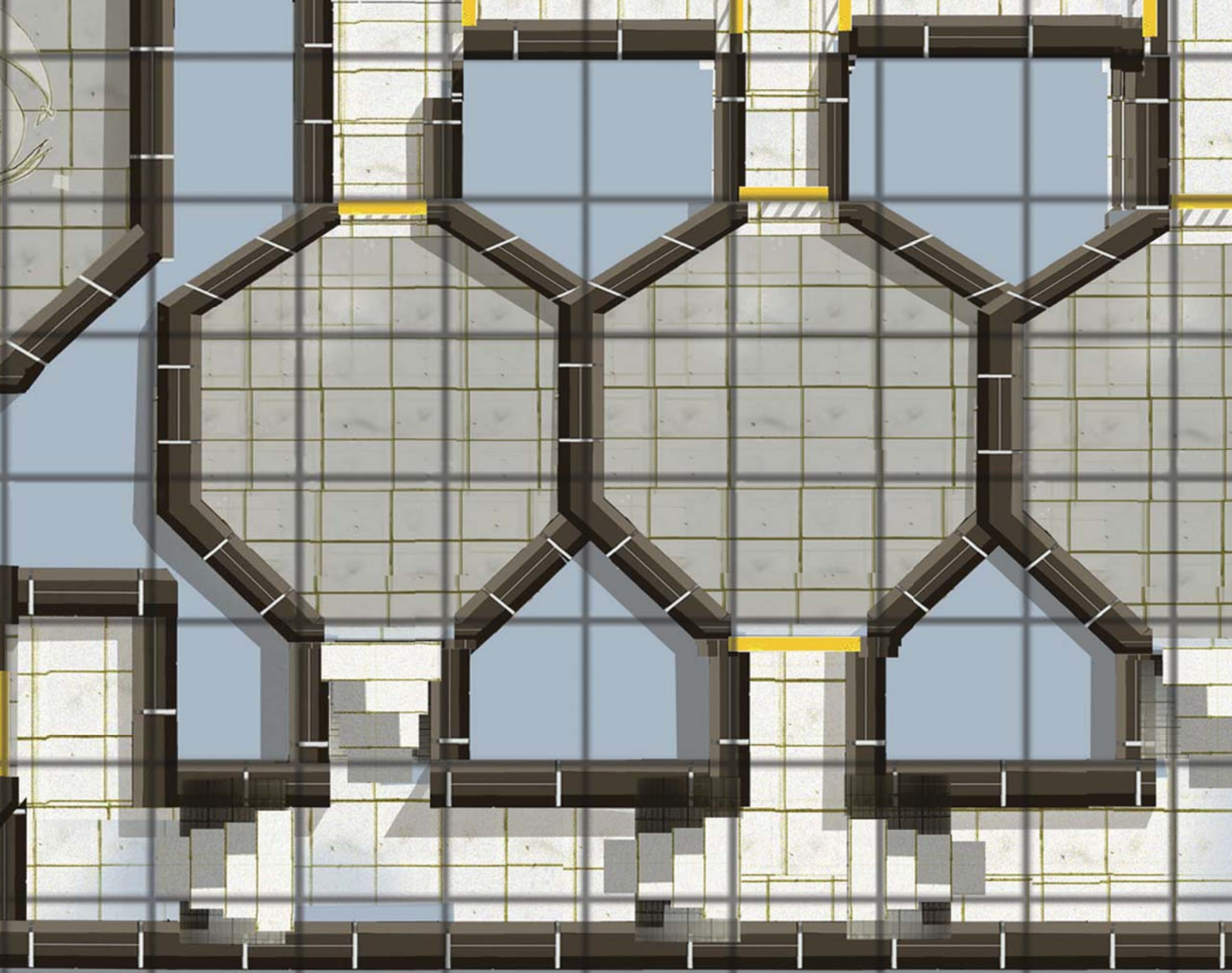


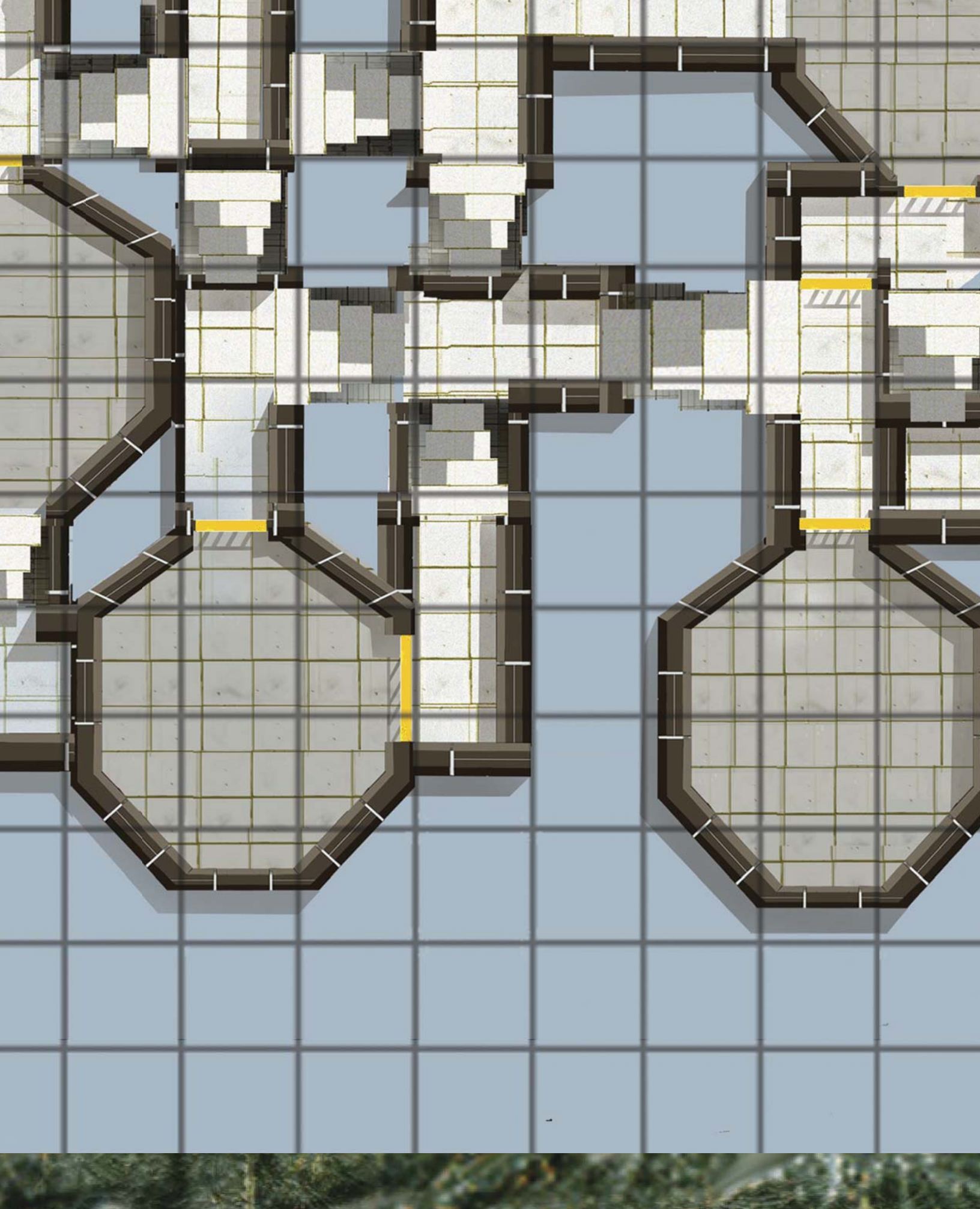


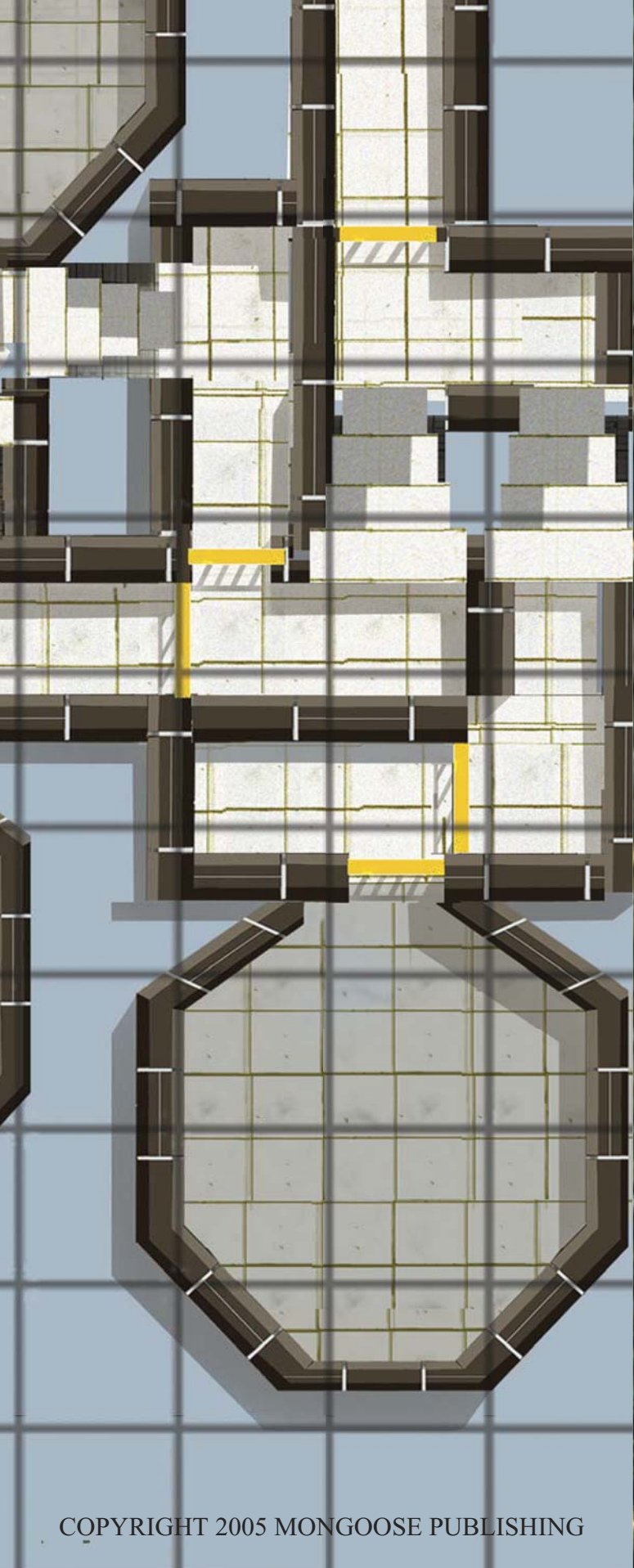


RUINS OF THE DRAGON LO









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Northwest Riverbanks

Griffon Tribe Lands

Here Be DRAGONS

Silver Mirror Tribe Lands



Orc Tribes



The Haunted Lake

МОДИТ МОРИД

Stonehold Fortress

Goblin Bands



The Sacred Stones

The Dragon Stone

Moss Rock Tribe Lands

Goblin Bands



Orc Tribes



Goblin Bands

THE MORID COUNTRY

Being a Chart of
As mapped by Fall Garnwynn Esq.

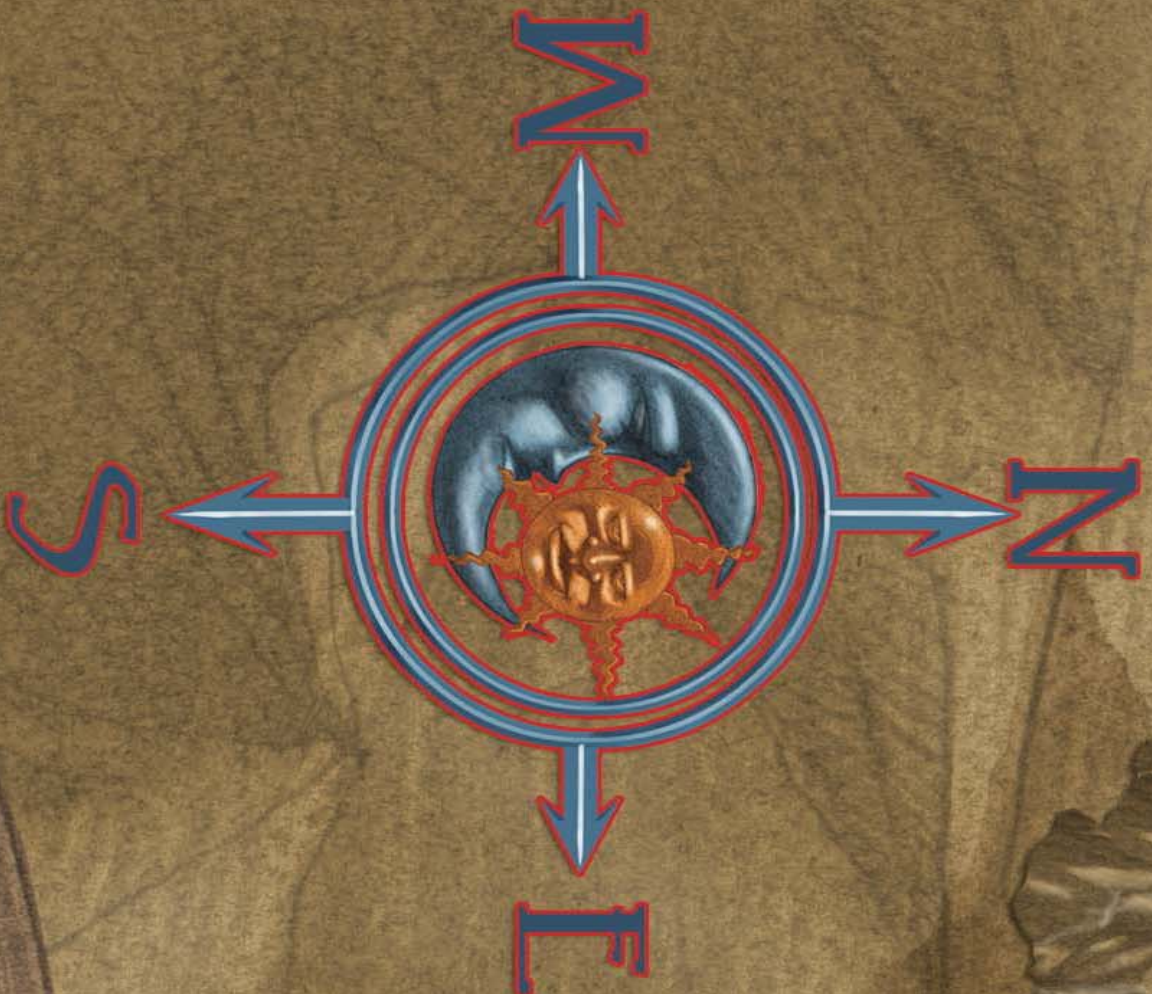
Meadowvale

The Last Shrine



barony





Being a Chart of

THE MORD TOWNT

As mapped by Fiall Garnwynn Esq.

Griffon Tribe Lands



WOLVES

The Haunted
Lake

MOODNT
MOORD

Northwest Riverbanks

HERE BE
DRAGONS





GOBLIN
BANDS



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The Sacra



GOBLIN
BANDS

Meadowvale



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Stonehold Fortress



Silver Mirror
Tribe Lands



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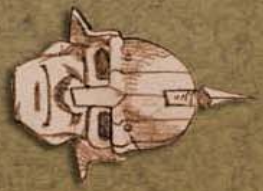


red Stones

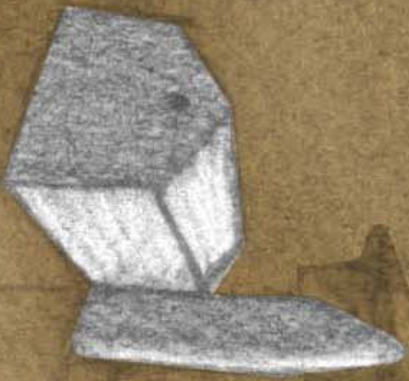


GOBLIN
BANDS

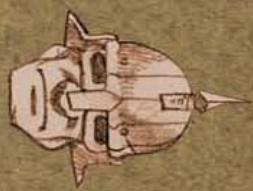
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TRIBES



The Last Shrine



ORC
TRIBES

The Dragon
Stone

Moss Rock
Tribe Lands

Eastern B

